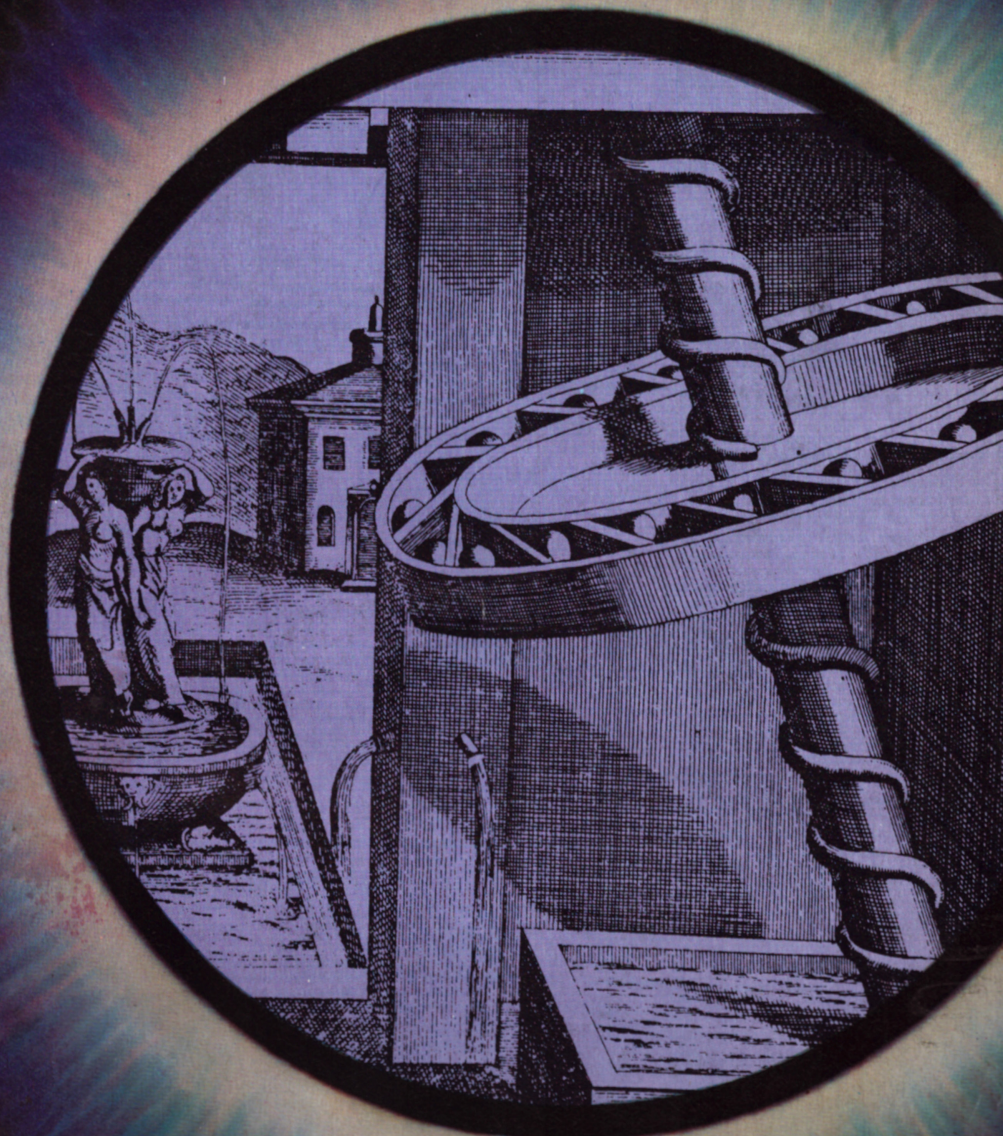
60p

# THE Unexplained

MYSTERIES OF MIND SPACE & TIME

Future shock
Crashed saucers at Roswell
Perpetual motion machines
Telepathy: seeing the light
Oldfield: current crusader

102



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# THE Unexplained
## MYSTERIES OF MIND SPACE & TIME

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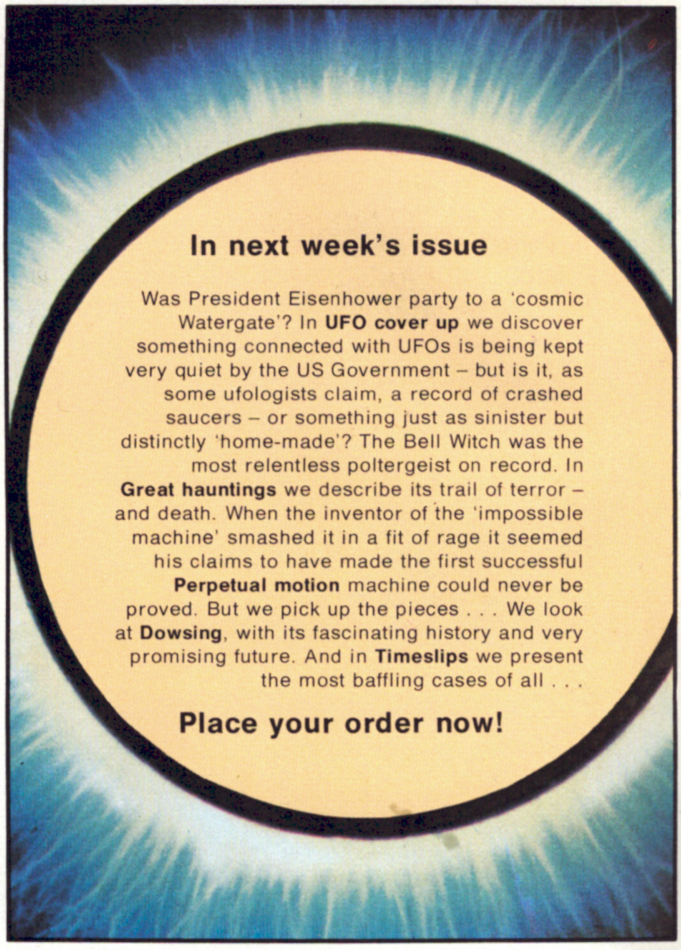



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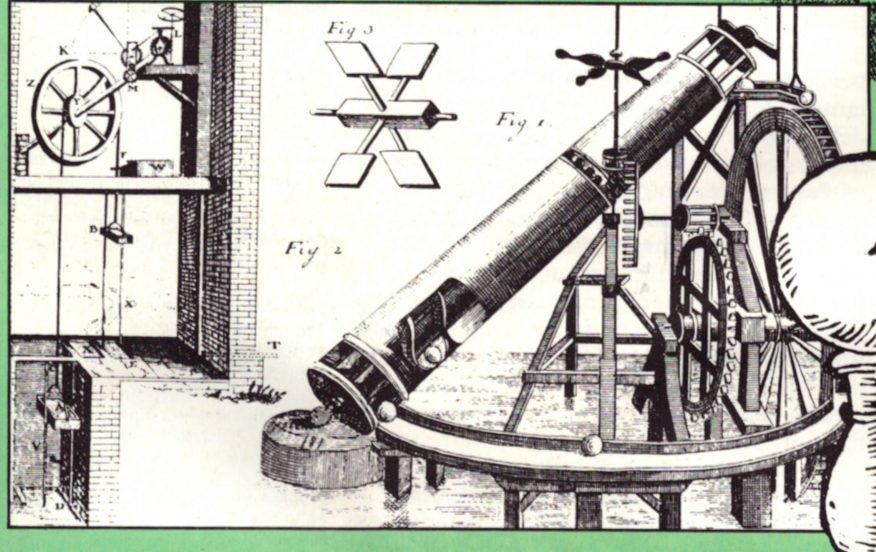
# The impossible machine

**The impossible dream to build the impossible machine has inspired inventors to design perpetual motion devices for hundreds of years. Did one man succeed where all others failed? ARCHIE ROY assesses the claims made for Orffyreus's marvellous wheel**

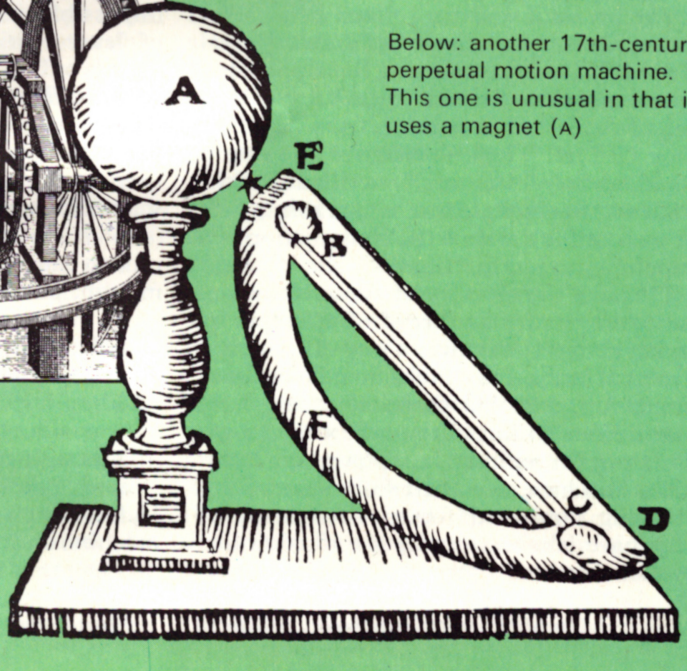
IN THE CASTLE OF WEISSENSTEIN, the atmosphere was electric. The date was 26 November 1717. Duke Karl, the Landgrave of the little duchy in south-west Germany, watched while his officials examined the seals on the doors to the locked room. When everyone was satisfied that they were intact, the officials broke them and then unlocked and swung open the doors. The observers glanced at each other as the sound of a regular clicking noise came to their ears. They pressed forward after the Duke. In awe they looked upwards at the great 12-foot (4-metre) wheel revolving steadily, performing its 26 revolutions a minute. At a word from the Duke, they examined the secured windows and every other possible means of entrance or exit. To their minds there was no doubt about it. The wheel had been revolving in a totally sealed room for a fortnight, since 12 November.

The room was again locked and sealed with the same care as on the first occasion. This time, however, it was left closed for a

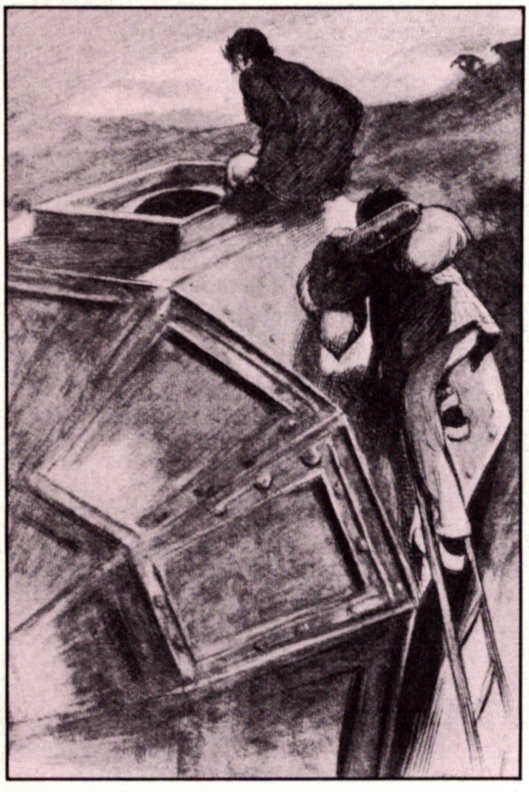



Above: two samples from the never-ending stream of designs for perpetual motion machines. The top one is from the 17th century and the other from the 18th.

Both employ a wheel, the most common device proposed by inventors to achieve perpetual motion. No inventor has ever been granted a patent




Below: another 17th-century perpetual motion machine. This one is unusual in that it uses a magnet (A)



much longer period. It was not until 4 January of the following year that the room was re-opened, again after a careful examination of the locks and seals. When the company entered the room, they saw that the wheel was turning at its usual speed, just as before.

To the Landgrave and his officials the test was conclusive. Duke Karl gave the inventor of the wheel a certificate dated 27 May 1718, stating that the precautions taken had been sufficient to ensure that the performance of the machine was not due to fraud. The following year, the inventor published this certificate in a pamphlet he wrote to describe his discovery.

The inventor was one Johann Ernst Elias Bessler, better known as Orffyreus. He arrived at this name by writing the alphabet in a circle and taking the thirteenth letter after each of the letters in Bessler, from which he made Orffyre. Then he latinised the result. His discovery, seemingly verified by the Duke's tests, appeared to be a realisation of the impossible dream – the construction of a perpetual motion machine.

Through the tapestry of Western history there runs a curious thread of attempts by human beings to discover a way of creating a perpetual motion machine. Some have been enticed by plausible theories, others have been driven by cupidity – the urge to get something for nothing, be it power or money. Still others have seen their search as a way of achieving fame and fortune, for many of them have laboured under the illusion that the discoverer of a means of obtaining perpetual motion – the creation of energy from nothing – would get immense rewards. Whether this is true or not, such a discovery would certainly revolutionise society.

Exactly what is meant by perpetual motion? It is the action that will keep a device moving by itself forever, requiring no supply of energy to keep it going and losing no energy of its own. One type of perpetual motion machine would do external work, such as raising weights, for an indefinite period from its own internal energy. Such a machine would be the 'purest' sort of perpetual motion device.

### An amazing substance

Not quite so 'pure' is a machine that would operate perpetually by cutting off the action of gravity completely. H. G. Wells created a fictional success along these lines in his book *The first men in the Moon* (1901), when Professor Cavor manufactured a substance subsequently called cavorite. A sheet of cavorite was capable of cutting off the force of the Earth's gravity from every object above it. By operating a system of cavorite-coated panels attached to his spaceship, Cavor was able to travel to the Moon. Wells obviously understood or researched the theory of perpetual motion. For if a sheet of a substance like cavorite were held under a mass, that mass would become weightless and could be raised without effort. The removal of the sheet would restore weight to the mass, which would then fall. The perpetual rise and fall could be used to perform work. Alas for such dreams, a substance like cavorite exists only in Wells's book.

There are still other modifications of the 'pure' perpetual motion machine – for example, building them to use magnetic or electrical forces or certain properties of liquids (see box).

Most of those who have tried to create a perpetual motion machine have done so in ignorance of the laws of physics. These decree that a perpetual motion device is impossible to achieve, whatever combination of levers, gravity, magnetism, electricity, liquids or heat is used. It is strange that many of those obsessed with the idea of perpetual motion have exhibited an arrogance bordering on megalomania, and have resolutely ignored the laws formulated by centuries of scientific research. As Henry Dircks (1806–1873), a civil engineer and the author of two authoritative volumes on perpetual motion, put it:

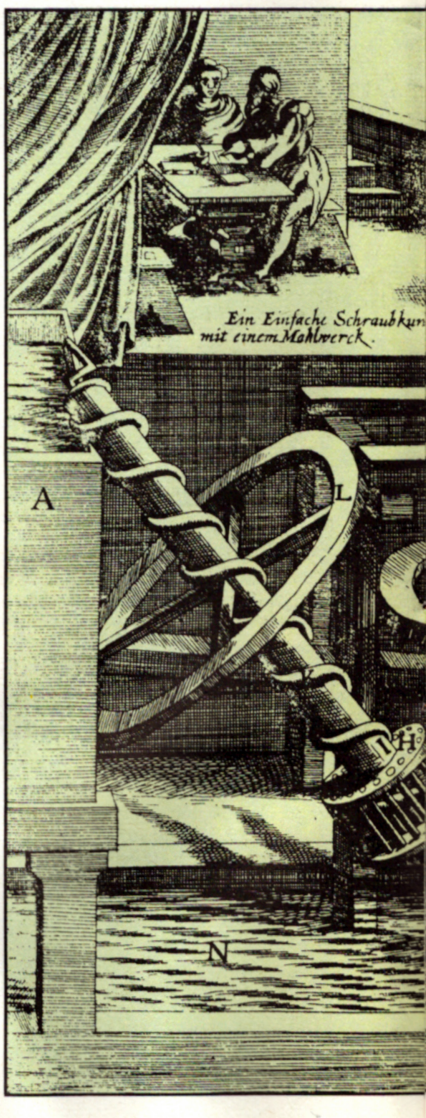
> A more self-willed, self-satisfied, or self-deluded class of the community . . . it would be impossible to imagine. They hope against hope, scorning all opposition with ridiculous vehemence, although centuries have not advanced them one step in the way of progress.

In fact the character of the perpetual motion machine enthusiasts brings to mind a poem:

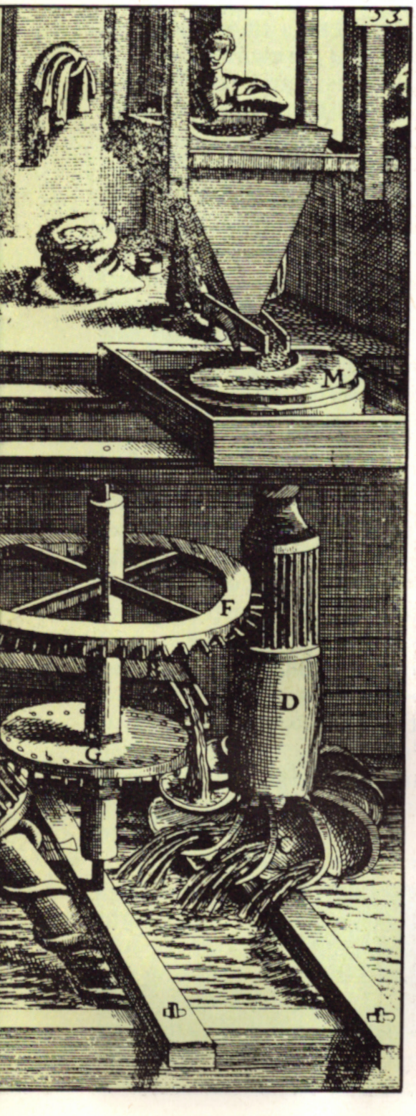
> They told him it couldn't be done.
> He laughed and went right to it.
> He tackled the thing that couldn't

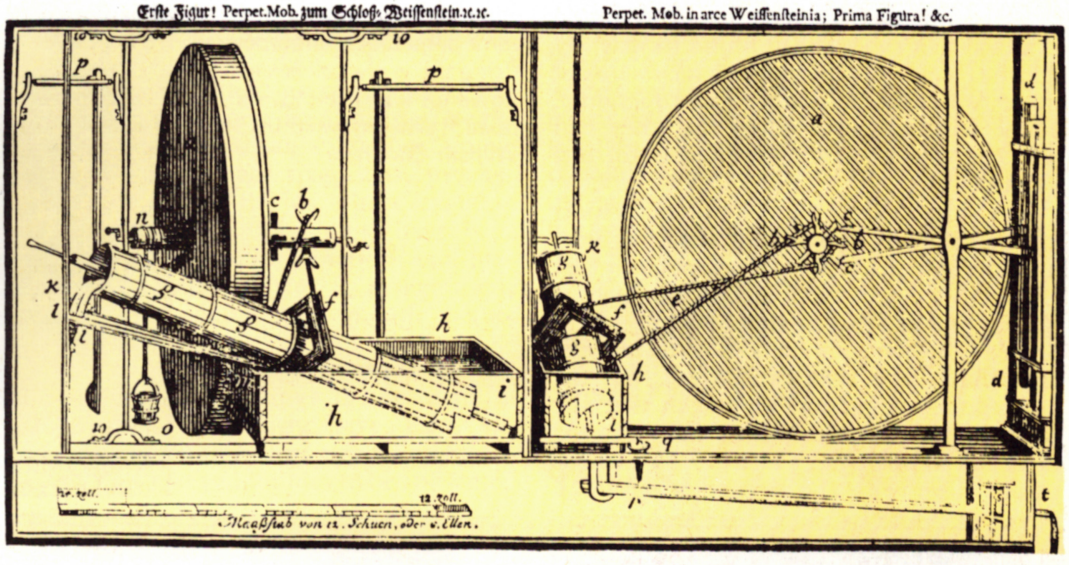
Left: Professor Cavor and his friend set out for the Moon in H.G. Wells's novel *The first men in the Moon* (1901). The professor had invented a substance called cavorite which, used in sheets, cut off the force of Earth's gravity in a way that enabled the flight into space. Wells must have known the theory of perpetual motion because, if a sheet of a substance like cavorite were placed under a mass, that mass could become weightless and could be raised without effort. If the sheet were removed, the weight would be restored to the mass and it would fall. The perpetual rise and fall could be used as energy

Below: an engraving of a perpetual motion machine published in Nuremberg in 1673



Orffyreus (below) and his famous wheel (right). This perpetual motion machine was certified by the Landgrave Duke Karl in 1718 as being genuine after it had worked for some time in a carefully sealed room in his castle. The inventor himself later destroyed his masterpiece in a fit of wild rage






be done –

And couldn't do it!

The fact is that the theory of a perpetual motion machine, operating without any supply of energy, violates the principle of the conservation of energy. This states that energy can neither be created nor destroyed. Since Einstein's breakthrough this has been somewhat modified because we now know that energy can be created by annihilating mass, according to his equation $E=mc^2$, where $E$ is the amount of energy created by the destruction of a mass, $m$, and $c$ is the velocity of light. But it is only in the hearts of stars, nuclear bombs and nuclear reactors that such creation can take place. Outside such subatomic realms, energy may be transferred from one form to another but never created or destroyed.

Perpetual motion – like alchemy, psychic phenomena, gold and silver mines, medicine, religion and other matters potentially influential and/or lucrative – has attracted the confidence trickster. Some frauds, with the utmost ingenuity, have extracted large sums of money from the gullible with ostensible perpetual motion machines. One such swindler was the American John W. Keely who operated in 1870 with his 'pneumatic-pulsating-vacuo-engine'. Another displayed a large rotating wheel in London, its mechanism being concealed by a cover stretched over it. Unfortunately, when snuff was blown through a hole in the side of the drum, the 'mechanism' was found to be capable of sneezing and cursing!

With these considerations in mind, we return to that remarkable test carried out in 1717 in Duke Karl's castle at Weissenstein. It was the culmination of Orffyreus's career.

Orffyreus was born at Zittau in Saxony in 1680. He studied theology, medicine, painting and mechanics, a not unusual combination in those days. By his early thirties he had achieved a certain fame as the creator of machines that turned without motive power. These he exhibited in various places; but he always took the precaution of concealing the internal mechanism by a cover of canvas or linen attached to the outside framework.

We have details of the different devices he built and demonstrated from his own pamphlet and from Dirck's two-volume work, *Search for self-motive power* (1861 and 1870). Orffyreus's first perpetual motion wheel was shown in 1712 in the province of Gera. It was about 3 feet (1 metre) in diameter and about 4 inches (10 centimetres) thick. If started from rest, it would accelerate up to a constant angular speed, or number of revolutions per minute. It could also raise a weight of several pounds. Many of the spectators, though they could not point to any fraud, accused Orffyreus of trickery. Such accusations are often levelled at inventors, but Orffyreus seemed to invite them by his bombastic character and irritating manner.

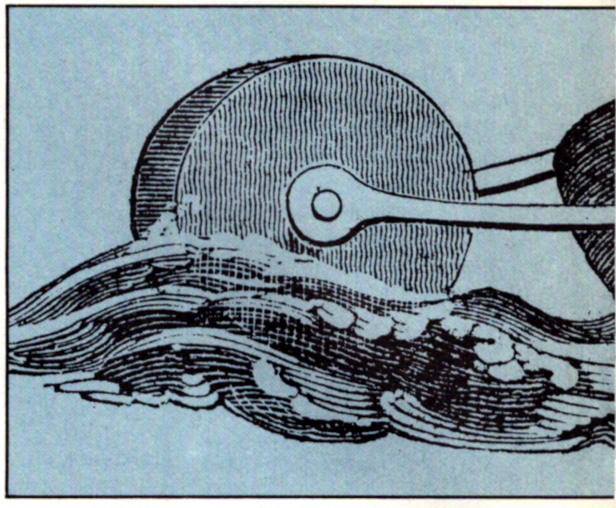
## Bigger and better

So Orffyreus moved on. In 1713 he built and exhibited a second and larger wheel at Draschwitz, near Leipzig. This one was about 5 feet (1.5 metres) in diameter and about 6 inches (15 centimetres) thick. It could reach a top speed of 50 revolutions a minute and could raise a weight of about 40 pounds (18 kilograms).

His third wheel was exhibited at Merseburg, also not far from Leipzig. It was even larger, being about 6 feet (2 metres) in diameter and some 12 inches (30 centimetres) thick. By now Orffyreus's fame had spread and he was able to get a number of witnesses to sign certificates that they had examined the machine and could confirm that it was not connected to any external power source. Notwithstanding these statements, opposition to his claims increased. This prompted Orffyreus to persuade some townspeople of good reputation to form a committee for the purpose of examining the wheel. They were not permitted to see behind the covering over the mechanism, but they were allowed to start the wheel from rest

in either direction. They were also permitted to attach to it ropes coiled round its axle. By this means, it could be made to raise a box of stones weighing 70 pounds (32 kilograms). These witnesses also stated that they had seen the wheel rotate continuously for one month.

For some reason the committee's report infuriated many people and some of them fulminated in print. They wrote not only that Orffyreus's claims were against the laws of nature, but also that he should be punished. Some published pamphlets showing how the trick must have been carried out, but the devices they suggested were such that any committee of sceptics would have spotted them in a moment. (There is a curious parallel here with the history of psychical

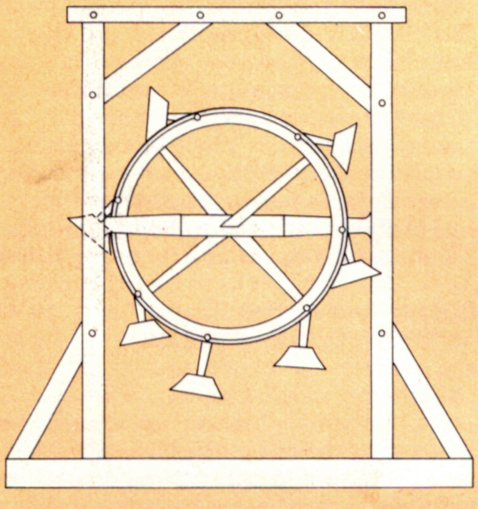


Right: a 19th-century plan for a perpetual motion device using the wave or current power of water to move a boat. It was invented by Sir William Congreve

## On and on and on...

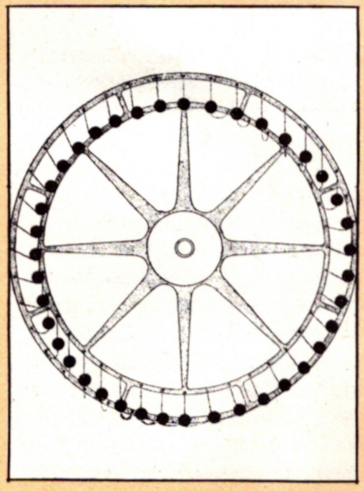
Many of the devices designed to produce perpetual motion have been based on the concept of the overbalancing wheel. Throughout the centuries, seekers after perpetual motion have rediscovered this idea again and again, each time offering it as a new invention.

It is understandable that the idea is an alluring one, because it seems so plausible. It says that if a number of weights can be attached to a wheel by hinges or



otherwise so that, as each weight is pulled round to reach the top, it slips farther from the centre, then there will be a permanent excess of torque on the descending side, and the wheel will continue to turn. In fact, however, no matter how ingeniously the weights are attached, the laws of mechanics decree that, at some position of the wheel, the weights will counterbalance each other and the wheel will not keep turning – if it turns at all.

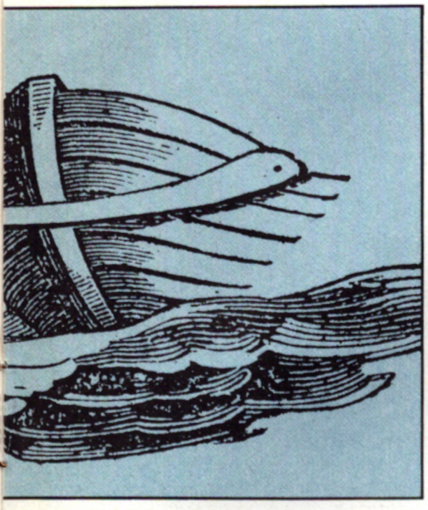
The 13th-century French architect Villard de Honnecourt seems to be the first to have left written evidence of work on the overbalancing wheel. One of his sketchbooks, preserved in the National Library, Paris, contains a rough drawing of such a device (far left). Had Honnecourt used perspective in making the sketch, the wheel would be shown at right angles to the frame. Another wheel that was amply described if not sketched was that of Edward Somerset, Marquis of Worcester, an amateur scientist. In his book known as *A century of inventions* (1633), he gives details of a perpetual motion machine that, he claims, was seen to work by Charles I and some of his court. In the 19th century, Henry Dircks, author of the classic work on perpetual motion, illustrated a reconstruction of Worcester's wheel in the first of the two volumes (below left). Worcester's wheel is probably the most famous perpetual motion device apart from Orffyreus's. The two inventors have in common the fact that no one disproved their claims in their day.



Dr Thomas Young, who served the Royal Society as foreign secretary from 1802 to 1829, was a physicist as well as a physician. In a lecture in which he demolished the notion of perpetual motion, he demonstrated a wheel he had designed as a sample (right). Pointing out its futility, he said: 'To seek for a source of motion in the construction of a machine betrays a gross ignorance of the principles on which all machines operate.'

A device that does work, however, is the children's toy known as the drinking duck. The duck, free to swivel on an axle supporting it, continually bends to dip its bill into a glass of water and then returns to its upright position.

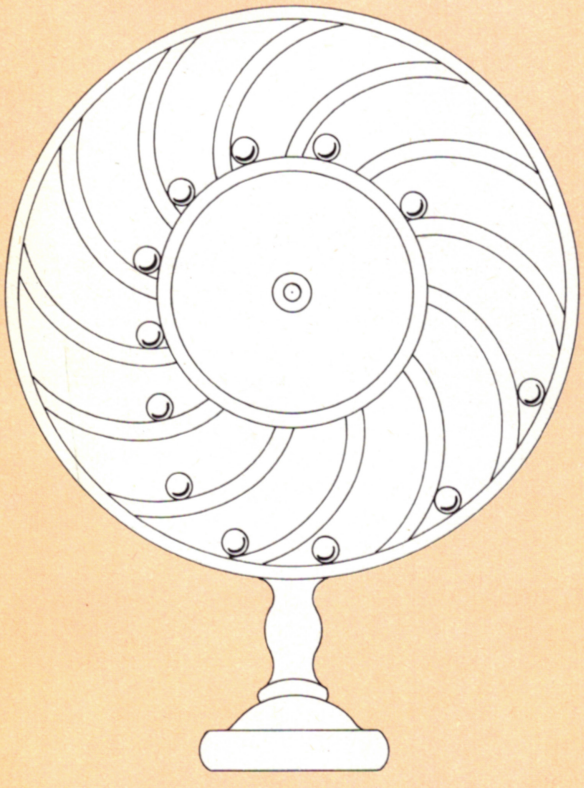
The device contains a supply of a volatile liquid such as ether. The weight of the ether in the reservoir is just sufficient to keep the duck standing upright (right, A). In the Sun's rays, some of the ether vapourises and rises into the head. No longer balanced, the duck tilts



research. All too often, critics of long and careful investigations of psychics – without ever spending more than a few minutes considering the phenomena and never experiencing them at first hand, and despite the fact that the investigators number among them physicists, stage magicians, psychologists, doctors and the like – have leaped in to 'explain' how a fraud must have been carried out. Whenever emotion and prejudice are aroused, there is a regrettable tendency to operate the mouth before engaging the brain.)

Orffyreus left Merseburg towards the end of 1716 and found refuge in the castle of Weissenstein. The Landgrave Karl, intrigued by accounts he had heard, became his patron and arranged for him to be appointed a town councillor. For a time Orffyreus went about his municipal duties but, inevitably, he began to build another of his wonderful wheels – like an actor who has retired but continues to come back to the stage for one last farewell performance. Orffyreus almost certainly believed that, sooner or later, lasting fame and fortune would be his if he could but persuade influential rulers, scientists and bankers that he had indeed discovered the secret of perpetual motion. On their side, Duke Karl and his court were eager to see one of Orffyreus's wheels. So Orffyreus was singing for his supper when he built his perpetual motion machine in 1717.

*Had Orffyreus really succeeded in building a perpetual motion machine? See page 2054*

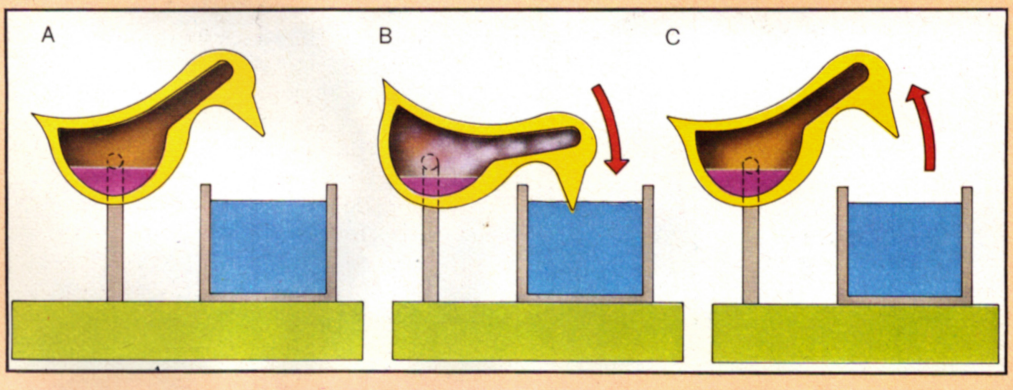


over and dips its bill into the glass of water (below, B). The lower temperature of the water condenses the ether, causing it to run back into the reservoir. After a short period, the weight of the ether is sufficient to tilt the duck back into its upright position (below, C).

Such a device will operate indefinitely. But it is a cheat as a perpetual motion machine of the purest kind because energy is being supplied by sunlight. Self-winding watches, which have appeared in various guises, are in the same category: energy must be supplied in every case. In some, the movement of the wearer's wrist is sufficient for winding, and in others, the watch is wound by the variation of pressure or temperature in the atmosphere.

Patent offices have been inundated with claims for the invention of perpetual motion machines, and various countries have different ways of dealing with them. The British are uncompromising: perpetual motion machines are not considered for patenting because they are contrary to well-established physical laws. The United States does not deny the possibility of a perpetual motion device, but requires the inventor to supply a working model together with the application for the patent. The first one has yet to be submitted.

Above: Sir Thomas Young, distinguished 19th-century scientist, medical doctor and foreign secretary of the Royal Society. Thomas once gave a lecture demolishing the idea of perpetual motion, designing his own wheel to demonstrate that it could not be achieved



# Future shock

**Timeslips into the future are even more disturbing than timeslips into the past – for they suggest that our lives are fixed in advance. JOAN FORMAN describes some striking examples of such excursions into the future**

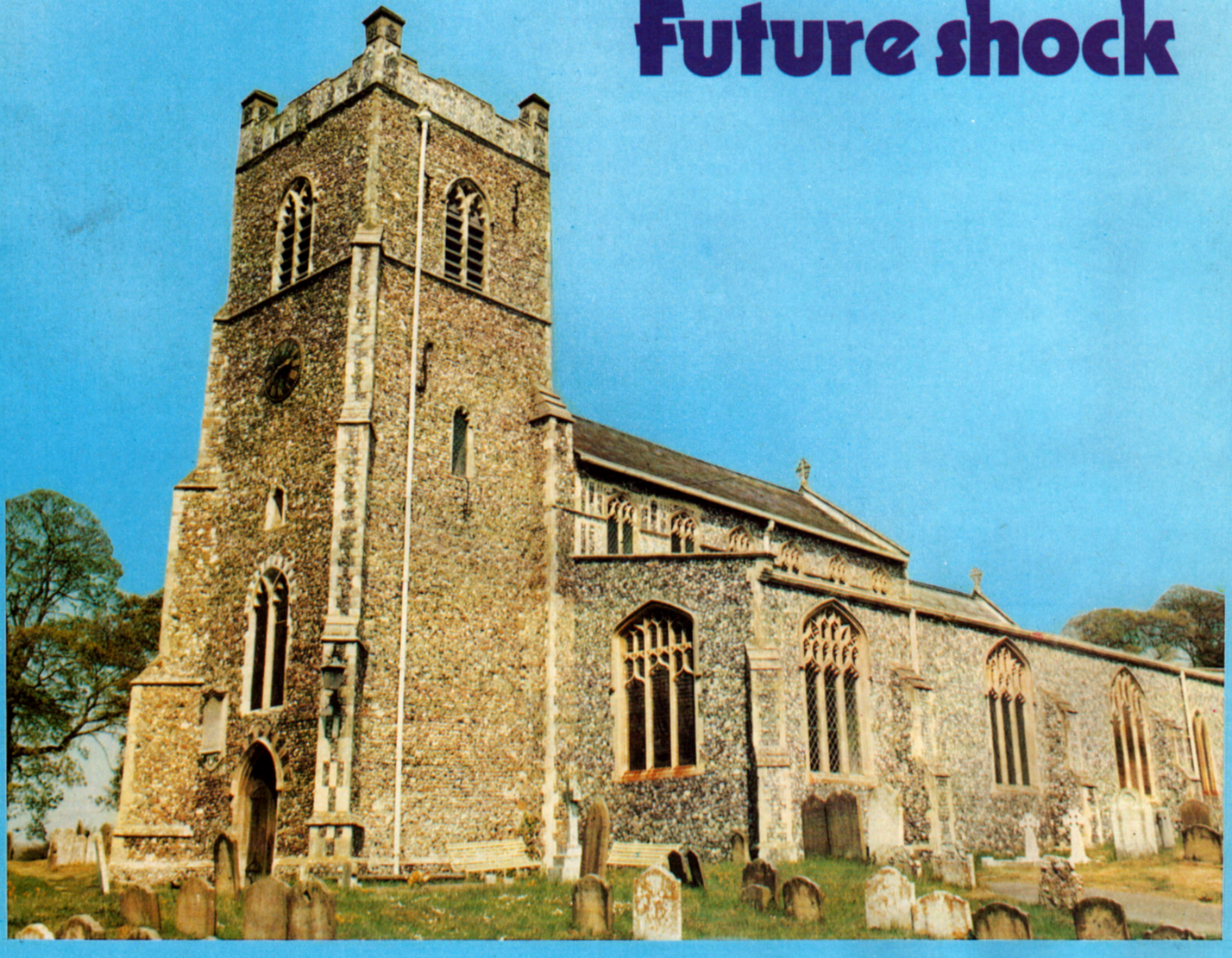
PRECOGNITION MUST SURELY BE the strangest kind of disruption of our time experience. Sometimes it is short-term, and only a few minutes, days or weeks elapse between the experience and the events that bear it out. But sometimes 20 years or more can pass between foresight and fulfilment. On occasion, the precognition is forgotten until the events foreseen actually occur.

Following a series of television programmes on the subject of timeslips, an English clergyman wrote to the BBC describing three precognitive dreams that he had experienced during one period of his life. They had occurred in the space of two months in about 1965 when he was vicar of a parish in Nottinghamshire.

Each dream began in the same way, in a vicarage that he recognised as being his childhood home. Yet in each dream the house seemed to belong to a different church. In the first he left the vicarage to inspect the church: it was a beautiful medieval one. In the second dream the church was a large and dark Victorian building. The third dream included a variation, for the dreamer did not walk from the vicarage to the church, but walked to the bottom of the garden before seeing what he took to be the ruins of Hadleigh Castle, near Benfleet in Essex.

The clergyman forgot his dreams and did not recall them until he was appointed to his next parish, at Saxmundham in Suffolk. Its medieval church precisely matched the church that had appeared in his first dream the previous year.

Five years passed before the clergyman's next change of residence. He had dismissed the possibility that the second dream would be fulfilled, for he did not care for Victorian churches and thought it unlikely that he would accept an appointment to one. Yet when in 1971 he was offered a living in Beckenham, Kent, he accepted it at once,



The medieval church at Saxmundham in the East Anglian county of Suffolk. In 1966 a new incumbent arrived in this parish – and recognised the church as the one that he had seen in the first of a series of dreams in the previous year

only later realising that its large Victorian church was the one he had seen in the dream.

By now both he and his wife were impressed by the accuracy of the dreams. But they had to wait until 1977 to test the truth of the third. It was then that the clergyman was appointed vicar of St Mary's, Bury St Edmunds, in Suffolk. He discovered that at the bottom of the very large churchyard were the ruins of an old abbey. There two sections of wall rose – and they resembled remarkably closely the two towers of Hadleigh Castle.

The clergyman was certain that he did not allow his dreams to influence his acceptance of any of the livings. He recollected the dream prophecies only when he had actually accepted the appointments and moved into the respective vicarages.

### Landscape of fear

There was a lapse of 12 years between the clergyman's third dream and its fulfilment. An even greater length of time was spanned by a recurrent precognitive dream that first occurred in 1955. The setting of the dream, which was experienced by a married English woman, was always the same: a flat landscape of fields with a windmill in the distance, the whole scene enclosed by leafless trees and a hedge. The action of the dream was also basically the same in each repetition: she was always running through grass and mud towards the windmill, with the sound of feet pounding behind her in pursuit. The mill seemed to be her goal and to represent safety – but she never succeeded in reaching it.

As often happens in recurrent dreams, the action developed with time. No longer did she merely hear the sounds of pursuit, she actually came to see the pursuer's shadow on the grass and she knew that whoever or whatever was chasing her was gaining ground. The dream was frightening and verged on nightmare. Although in the dream she was never caught by her pursuer, neither did she escape or find help.

In 1970 the woman and her husband moved to East Anglia. Although the landscape around their home at Sutton, in Norfolk, was flat and agricultural, the woman did not connect it with her dream.

Shortly after their move the husband died. And only then did the wife discover the landscape of her dream. She had often seen the Sutton windmill but not from an angle where she could have identified it with the windmill in the dream. Not, that is, until the usual road to the mill was being repaired, and the woman found herself obliged to approach the mill from its far side. At once she found herself in the dream landscape – the waving grass, ploughed field, bare trees and the windmill itself, at the angle at which she had always seen it in the dream. The dream had always had a winter setting; the woman's husband had died in January.

Subsequently this woman came to feel

Below: abbey ruins at Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk, East Anglia. This is another site that the clergyman seems to have seen in one of his precognitive dreams. He took the ruins in his dream to be those of Hadleigh Castle in Essex – until he encountered the abbey ruins

Left: the magnificent church of St Mary's at Bury St Edmunds, dating from the 15th century. It was fully 12 years after the last of his series of timeslip dreams that the clergyman took up the living at this church – and fulfilled the precognition

that the pursuer in her dream was death – or, at least, the disaster represented by the loss of her husband. After his death the dream did not recur. There had been about 15 years between its first occurrence and the woman's recognition of the dream landscape.

Could the dreamer have gained her knowledge of the mill from her subconscious memory? Although she had never visited Norfolk when she began to have the dreams it is possible that at some time she had seen a picture of the Sutton mill and then forgotten it. But it is surely stretching credulity too far to suggest that it was pure coincidence that, years later, she should move to live beside that very mill; and that it was coincidence that she should experience the threat and fear of bereavement in the place where, in her dream, she had felt just such emotions.

### Two-level timeslip

Here is another example of one of these strange, chilling and almost inexplicable long-term precognitions.

In 1896 a small boy in Hanley, Staffordshire, in the English Midlands, was given a severe beating by a sadistic schoolmaster for some minor misdemeanour. The child was very young – seven years old – and sensitive.

> Instead of going to school in the afternoon I played truant. I remember even now running along the street scraping my iron-shod boots on the pavement so as to strike sparks. Also stopping to listen to organ music coming from a little church although the church was empty and locked up. Across the road at the end of the street there was (and still is) an archway to a street running at right-angles. It led to the backs of the houses and shops. To the left it was very short as there were only two (I think) houses, and it was terminated by a blank wall. At the other side of the wall there was a vast area of waste land.
>
> On this particular day there was a doorway in the wall and when I went through I found myself in a different world, a small town with houses nothing like any I had ever seen before. I went along one street and all the houses were empty. I entered several but came out again without attempting any exploration. Eventually I stayed in one of the houses and going upstairs I came to a large room looking on to a landscape I had never seen before. The land sloped away to a valley, although I could not see what was at the bottom, and beyond there were low tree-covered hills. Even at that age I was fascinated by the sun and the stars and I realised that I was facing east.
>
> That was the vision. What my physical body was doing I haven't the least idea and I can't think of one; most certainly an adventurous boy of seven would not play truant just to go to sleep.

The windmill at Sutton in Norfolk, East Anglia. A woman who had newly moved to this district recognised the windmill and the surroundings as those she had seen in a recurrent dream that she had first had 15 years previously. The dream had been filled with fear inspired by an unseen pursuer; her first view of the windmill in reality occurred at a time when she was still suffering from the shock of her husband's death

These recollections were described many decades later, when the subject of the experiences had retired from a career as a professor of electrical engineering. The events that the 'vision' anticipated occurred during the First World War:

> Early in 1917 the Germans broke off the Somme battles and made a retirement of about forty miles [65 kilometres]. Besides taking the High Command completely by surprise they left a desert forty miles [65 kilometres] wide.
>
> I was sent to 4th Army Headquarters which was established a little way east of a deserted village called Villers Carbonnel. It was close to the River Somme where it runs northwards before taking an abrupt turn to the west at St Quentin.
>
> One evening I had some hours free and I decided to explore some of the neighbouring villages and make a few sketches (which I still have). I came to a village called Misery (most appropriately) and when I entered it I had that feeling which is described as hair-raising. I was in the street of my earlier vision. All the people were gone, apart

> from dead Germans I found in several houses I entered and hurriedly left. Then I found a house free of these unpleasant occupants and going upstairs I found myself in the large room facing east. The landscape was exactly as I had found it before. The valley was the Somme valley but as Misery is some way back the river is not visible.

There was another curious factor. In his childhood 'hallucination' the subject had happened to notice that the village street in which he seemed to find himself was named Windmill Street. When the professor revisited Hanley in about 1960 he found that an estate of houses had been built on the waste ground, beyond the archway he had used that day in 1896. One of its streets was called Windmill Street.

This is one of the most complex and convincing cases of long-distance precognition. Not only did the vision present in great detail the exact scene that the professor was to visit 20 years after his childhood experience; it also presented the street name that would be associated with the site of the experience decades later. It worked, therefore, on two levels: one concerned the personal history of the small boy, 20 years ahead; the other concerned the history of the site of the experience, some 65 years ahead. It would be interesting to know whether there is any Rue du Moulin in the French village of Misery.

The extraordinary and arresting phenomenon of precognition, of seeing the future anything from minutes to years ahead of the observer's 'now', can hardly be disputed in the face of evidence that has accumulated throughout the ages. In the cases we have described a comparison could be made between the vision and the events that matched it. Doubtless many precognitions occur that are not sufficiently striking to be remembered in this way and so their validity cannot be subsequently confirmed. But there are also apparent precognitions referring to times so far ahead that their date cannot be guessed at. They appear to transport the subject into an era and an environment that are barely recognisable.

*On page 2047: timeslips into the distant future – and their possible explanations*

Below: Hanley, part of the industrial city of Stoke-on-Trent in the English Midlands. In 1896 in this area, which was then waste ground, a small boy playing truant found himself apparently in a street named Windmill Street, in a village unlike any he had ever seen. Years later he was to recognise the village in war-stricken France – and decades later still, to find that a Windmill Street now stood on the former waste ground

Left: the village of Misery in the valley of the Somme, in western France, as it looked after the German retreat of 1917. This was the village seen by the child in Hanley 21 years before, and recognised by him when he was an officer with the British Army in 1917. In the timeslip experience the village was uninhabited; at the time the officer saw it, its only occupants were the corpses of German soldiers. Was the 'cosmic joker' at work when a vision of Misery came to a child who was *in misery* at the time?

# Telepathy: seeing the light

**We have all had extra-sensory experiences at one time or another – and it is often said that we all have telepathic abilities. SERENA RONEY-DOUGAL describes some of her own experiments designed to test for – and to train – this hidden talent**

IMAGINE SITTING in a comfortable chair in a darkened room, wearing headphones through which you can hear the roar of a waterfall cascading down a Welsh mountain, while all you can see is a diffuse red glow: your eyes are covered with halved ping-pong balls on which a red light shines.

It is often said that all of us have telepathic ability. But how can we become aware of it? The extraordinary situation described above is part of an experiment – similar to Carl Sargent's Ganzfeld experiments (see page 1430) – designed to test for ESP ability. As subject, you are first welcomed by the experimenter, and then asked to fill in a 'mood report' describing your attitude to the experiment and your general emotional state. The experimenter seats you in a comfortable chair, puts headphones over your ears, and adjusts the level of waterfall noise until it is comfortable. She then plays another sound at such a level that you can just hear it through the waterfall noise, then drops the noise level by five decibels so that you cannot hear it at all; she places palmar electrodes on your left hand so that she can monitor any physiological response you may experience. Then she places halved ping-pong balls over your eyes, adjusts a red light so that it is 18 inches (45 centimetres) from your face. Finally, she switches off the waterfall sound and plays you a tape containing the suggestion that you will become aware of subconscious information. Then she switches on the waterfall sound again.

Deprived of outside sensory stimulation, you turn mentally inwards, becoming aware of thoughts, images and memories that are the expression of your subconscious mind. At the same time another person – the sender – is passing information to you by playing through your headphones a tape, but playing it at the level previously determined, so quietly that it is impossible for you to hear it against the waterfall noise. This is known as subliminal stimulation: the stimulus is physically real, but is too quiet to be perceived consciously. Instead, it is picked up at the subconscious level. The tape, in this experiment, carries five thematically related words, and is chosen at random from four by the sender after the beginning of the experiment. Thus no one knows, for the duration of the experiment, what the tape contains.

While in this state, you are asked to voice whatever comes into your mind. What you say is recorded and, after the experiment is over, you are asked to order the sets of target words according to which of them you feel corresponds most accurately with the impressions you gained while in the Ganzfeld state. You complete another mood assessment form and undergo a word association test for each of the four target tapes, in which you are asked to think of the individual target words and say whatever first comes into your head. The tape of your impressions is also submitted to three independent judges, who analyse it and estimate its correspondence with the four target tapes in the same way.

In the Ganzfeld state it is also possible to perceive information that is not being transmitted mechanically through the headphones, but communicated telepathically by the sender. In a separate experimental session, the sender selects a tape and plays it, not through your headphones, but through his – at an audible level. He then tries to visualise the image the words on the tape create, and project this image mentally to you.

In the experiment, the two means of transmission – subliminal auditory and telepathic – are varied randomly. Thus the subject does not know how the information is being mediated in any one session. The results show that people who are able to receive information that is transmitted subliminally are also sensitive to telepathically transmitted information; people who find it difficult to pick up information one way

generally find it equally difficult to do so the other. What is it that distinguishes between these two groups of people? One objective of the experiments described above is to pinpoint the kinds of psychological state that make this kind of information transfer possible.

An analysis of the experimental results shows that, out of a total of eight subjects, three consistently identified the target tape, placing it first or second. These three people show an awareness of the information, whether transmitted telepathically or mechanically, that is highly significant.

Looking at the procedure in this way, we can see that it is a two-stage process: the first stage involves the reception of the information in the subconscious, while the second stage involves forcing the subconscious knowledge into the conscious mind. Here it seems that those people who have some awareness of the way in which their subconscious minds work have an advantage: it is they who are able to translate the often quite complex and tortuous imagery of their subconscious minds into rational terms.

In order to illustrate the complexities of this translation and interpretation, let us consider an example of a Ganzfeld session conducted with a subject named Helen, in which she placed the target second. Here the target tape carried the five words 'sultan, Aladdin, harem, feasting, dancing'. While in the Ganzfeld state, she made the following remarks:

> Seeing something, don't know what it is . . . crib or something – cradle, I mean; definitely a cradle in a sitting room – Middle Ages sitting room – somebody rocking this cradle dressed in Middle Ages clothes – tapestry in the back . . . mineral – either coal or some sort of stone, mineral . . . changing to pool or something . . . flashes of light . . . beansprouts . . . kitchen – copper utensils.

Helen herself, in her analysis of her own impressions, understood the cradle images as being related to the harem; the flashes of light and mineral related to Aladdin and his magic lamp; the kitchen related to the feasting. Throughout the session she was preoccupied with food, and the cradle image occurred again later on. While there is no direct mention of an Arabian nights scene, Helen was able to tie in the thematic content of her image with the target so as to produce what is considered to be a 'hit'. Two of the three independent judges agreed with her analysis.

It is, of course, easy enough to see these connections when the person identifies the target. But when a person 'misses' the target, what is going on? Such 'misses' are generally not considered to be worthy of attention. But can we really say that telepathic or subliminal perception is operative only on those occasions when a person identifies the target?

As pointed out above, correct perception

Above: sitting in a darkened room, halved ping-pong balls on which a red light shines over his eyes, listening through headphones to the sound of the Cennarth Falls in Dyfed, Wales (left), the subject is in a state of sensory deprivation. He begins to become aware of the workings of his subconscious mind – and of the subliminal messages that are being transmitted to him by the sender

Serena Roney-Dougal's experiments involve information sent in ways not perceptible by the ordinary senses of the subject. In some experiments, the sender listens to a tape and tries to communicate the information on it by telepathy (left); in others, the tape is played directly to the subject – but so quietly that he cannot hear it. Here, Serena Roney-Dougal monitors the volume level of the tape (below)

of the target is a two-stage process, and one thing that has become apparent again and again during the experiments is that most of the 'misses' occur not because the information is not getting through to the subconscious, but as a result of incorrect evaluation of the impressions gained while in the Ganzfeld state. Images that relate to the target are generally present, but the subject is unable to relate them to the words on the target tape.

### Signal-to-noise ratio

Let us turn our attention to factors that may account for 'missing' targets. On some occasions there appears to be what might be called a low signal-to-noise ratio: the target-related imagery is present, but there is so much extraneous information – 'noise' – from the subconscious that it is extremely hard to identify the subliminal or telepathic input. This 'noise' is perhaps one of the mind's methods of defending itself against unwanted input. This phenomenon is well-known in psychology, especially in subliminal perception research, where it is called 'perceptual defence'. Obvious examples are just not hearing what you don't want to hear – the ability that makes it possible for you to hold a conversation in a roomful of noisy people, or not to hear a publican calling 'time'. A very clear example of this was provided by Mary, who in her Ganzfeld session spent 10 minutes talking about how she had given up drinking. The target words were 'tavern, keg, barrel, tankard, goblet', but she ranked this tape fourth – last – because, she said, it was 'too much of a coincidence'.

Most defences, however, are more subtle than this. David is a person who, according to his own estimations, scores very slightly above chance in both the telepathic and the subliminal sessions. Yet his session transcripts were scored significantly above chance by all three independent judges. In other words, a logical, analytical assessment of his thoughts by independent observers gave statistically significant evidence of target-related imagery. During the sessions, David was 'aware' of the target inasmuch as he thought about things that were related to the target. Yet on four occasions he was unable, in the analysis that followed the Ganzfeld session, to identify the target, mainly because he chose not to use an analytical judging procedure, instead picking the target that he 'felt' was the right one. But his personal assessment was inaccurate. Is this a form of defensiveness, or is it merely inexperience with the way one's mind works at the subconscious level?

A clearer example of the defensive process is provided by Paddy, whose attitude is one of disbelief in ESP. He did not believe that the images he saw while in the Ganzfeld state could bear any relationship at all to the target; yet, again and again, it did. The relationship was not clear, as in the case of

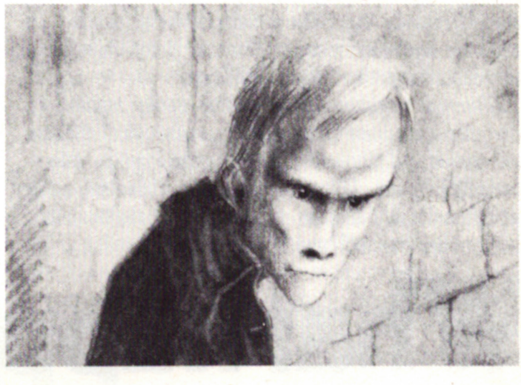
Below: a scene from the Arabian nights, in an illustration by Edmund Dulac. In one experiment, the target tape carried the words, 'sultan, Aladdin, harem, feasting, dancing'. While in the Ganzfeld state, the subject registered images of a crib, a room from the medieval period, some kind of mineral, a pool, flashes of light, beansprouts and a kitchen – and, on the basis of these impressions, and using free word association, was able to identify the correct tape. Three independent judges were asked to read a transcript of the subject's remarks during her Ganzfeld session, and to identify the set of target words she was describing. Two of them agreed with her identification

Above: smugglers attacked by the customs men, in a 19th-century illustration. In one session, the target words were 'smugglers, contraband, adventure, horses, moonlight'. The subject had impressions of ice, the *Titanic*, Alaskan permafrost – and boys in prison, the sinister character of Steerpike from Mervyn Peake's *Gormenghast* trilogy (right), and Albert Pierrepoint, the last British state executioner (above left). These images appear to have only a distant connection with the target words – but the subject's word association test revealed that he linked the word 'adventure' with 'cold', and 'smugglers' with 'gallows'

the three 'hitters' – but it was very definitely there. Although Paddy himself was unable to pick out the target, independent judges, with some understanding of the symbolic distortions and transformations that occur in the subconscious mind, were generally able to do so.

In one typical session with Paddy, the target words were 'smugglers, contraband, adventure, horses, moonlight'. In this session he talked several times about ice, icebergs, the *Titanic*, Alaskan permafrost and so on. After the Ganzfeld session, his word association with the target word 'adventure' was 'cold'; his word association with 'smugglers' was 'gallows' and, during the session, he had images of boys in prison, Roman soldiers, Steerpike, a character from Mervyn Peake's gothic novel *Gormenghast*, with a knife in his hand, cannonballs and, most significant of all, Albert Pierrepoint, the last of the state executioners. Although there is no direct connection between these images and the target words, the word associations provide a very revealing link. And it is important to remember that in free association work such as this, where a person is attempting to gain access to material from the subconscious, the mind works in distorted and essentially symbolic, dream-like ways. Thus we cannot expect to get a direct representation of the target in the Ganzfeld images; rather, it is connections like those in Paddy's sessions that we must look for. Only around 10 per cent of the subjects talk directly about the target theme, while the transcripts of all the participants have many rich symbolic and associational connections that are easily recognised by the independent judges – even if, as in Paddy's case, they are vehemently denied by the subject himself, possibly to reduce any distress he may feel at the idea of being able to perceive a target using methods he does not believe in. With a person whose attitude to ESP is negative, the distortions, embeddings and symbolism become even more complex, but the fact that they are more difficult to unravel does not necessarily mean that the subliminal or telepathic information has not been received at the subconscious level. It means merely that the 'noise' level is higher and the 'signal' is more distorted. With the 'hitters', the signal was clear and the extraneous noise very low; these people were familiar with their own mental processes, and could follow the indirect ways in which target words might influence their subconscious. In the example from Paddy's Ganzfeld session, incidentally, the sets of target words were 'jungle, elephant, tiger, swamp, alligator'; 'ghost, phantom, shadow, haunted, eerie'; 'teacher, professor, student, college, library.'

By examining the differences between those subjects who consistently hit the target, and those who consistently miss, we



can see that two factors emerge – factors that may account for these differences. The most important is that of attitude. Thus, someone who does not believe in his or her own capacity to become aware of subliminal and telepathic information and who claims to have had no personal experience of this sort of awareness, is very likely to miss the target. On the other hand, a person who has grown up in an atmosphere in which such things are accepted, may be able to learn to hit the target much of the time.

From the experiments, it appears that we all have some latent ESP ability. One way of becoming aware of this is to enter a passive and receptive state, such as that induced by the Ganzfeld, and learning by experience how to interpret the imagery gained there. In this sense these experiments can be regarded as a kind of training programme in ESP – and through it, we may be able to come to a greater understanding of the processes that are involved.

# What happened at Roswell?

**The best-documented case of a crashed saucer occurred near Roswell, deep in the New Mexican desert, in July 1947. The military first claimed to have it in custody, then denied its existence. What was the reason? HILARY EVANS investigates**

THE BELIEF THAT A FLYING SAUCER has crashed and been confiscated by the authorities has proved very difficult either to prove or to disprove. 'Believers' point to a rich assortment of isolated facts, rumours, hints and unsupported testimonies and insist that together they make up a case that demands serious investigation. The sceptics reply that no single item of evidence is conclusive and that there exists no solid case at all, only a myth created by those who wish to believe in it. A hoax or a misidentification, the sceptics claim, started the story and gave the lead to all kinds of rumour-mongers and hoaxers, sensationalist journalists and genuine out-and-out paranoids.

To evaluate this accusation, it is necessary to identify the earliest known form of the story, and see how much truth can be found in it. If it can be shown to be spurious, then perhaps the subsequent versions are no better. If, on the other hand, there seems to be some substance to it, then it may be worth investigating the story further.

The first occurrence of the story seems to relate to a cluster of events that occurred near the town of Roswell, New Mexico, commencing on 2 July 1947. The date is very significant: this was only a few days after Kenneth Arnold had his noted sighting over the Cascade Mountains in Washington state (see page 4), a sighting that can be said to mark the beginning of the modern UFO epoch.

At about 9.50 on the night of 2 July 1947, Mr and Mrs Wilmot, of Roswell, New Mexico, were sitting out on their front porch when all of a sudden 'a big glowing object' zoomed out of the sky from the south-east, and headed north-east towards the smaller town of Corona. It was travelling at high speed, and was in sight for only 40 to 50 seconds; they were able, however, to describe it as oval in shape, like 'two inverted saucers faced mouth to mouth'. Dan Wilmot thought it was completely silent; his wife thought she heard a slight swishing sound.

The following morning Barney Barnett, a civil engineer from Socorro, New Mexico, was working in a desert area, the plains of San Agustin, some 250 miles (400 kilometres) west of Roswell, and just west of Socorro. He saw sunlight reflecting off some kind of metallic object in what should have been empty desert; so, thinking it might be a crashed aircraft, he went towards it. What he found was 'some sort of metallic, disc-shaped object', 25 to 30 feet (8 to 10 metres) in diameter.

While inspecting it, he was joined by some archaeology students from the University of Pennsylvania. Together they contemplated an astonishing sight: beside the machine itself, which seemed to have been split open by explosion or impact, there were dead bodies scattered over the ground, and others still inside the machine. They were human-like, but small-eyed and hairless, and with heads over-large in proportion to their size. They were wearing grey, one-piece clothing, without belts or zips.

ROSWELL, NEW MEXICO, TUESDAY, JULY 8, 1947

RAAF Captur
On Ranch in

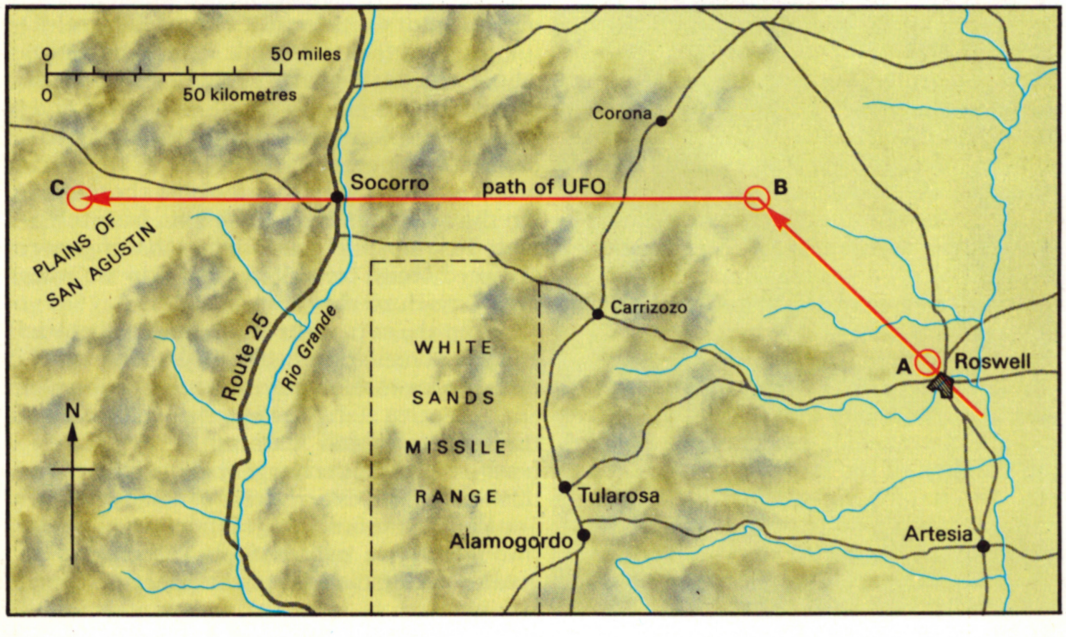
House Passes Tax Slash by Large Margin

Defeat Amendment By Demos to Remove Many from Rolls

Security Council Paves Way to Talks On Arms Reductions

American League Wins All-Star Game

Woodburn Compares Farm Progress in Past Twenty Years




Left: map showing the estimated course of the alleged spacecraft first seen by Mr and Mrs Wilmot in Roswell (A) at about 9.50 p.m. on 2 July 1947. Evidence of the craft's passage in the form of some strange metallic debris was found by 'Mac' Brazel on his ranch near Corona, New Mexico (B). And on the morning of 3 July a civil engineer working at San Agustin (C) found what appeared to be a crashed UFO, complete with dead humanoids

es Flying Saucer
Roswell Region

etails of
Disk
Revealed
Hardware
ad Wife
Disk Seen

Ex-King Carol Weds Mme. Lupescu

Former King Carol of Rumania and Mme. Elena Lupescu relax aboard the S. S. America bound for Cuba and Mexico in May, 1941. A member of Carol's household in Rio de Janeiro said the ex-king and his companion for 23 years in reign and exile were recently married at their hotel Copacabana Palace suite. (AP Wirephoto)

Miners and Operators Sign
Highest Wage Pact in History

Air Force General
Says Army Not
Doing Experiments

Above: the front page of the *Roswell Daily Record* for Tuesday, 8 July 1947. The headline was followed by a press statement from the Army Air Force saying that the 'flying disk' had been examined at Roswell Army Air Field and was now in the hands of 'higher headquarters'. The military subsequently denied that the craft had been anything but a weather balloon

Shortly after, a jeep containing an army officer drove up, and declared that the army was taking over control. The area was cordoned off: the civilians were told to leave the area, and warned that it was their patriotic duty to keep silent about what they had seen. Barnett heard later that the army brought in a large truck and took the object away.

Though Barnett is now dead – he is one of the principal witnesses, whom investigators, of course, were unable to interview – he told his story to some friends. The investigators found no reason to doubt their word; nor, from what they learned of Barnett himself, did they find any reason to disbelieve what he told his friends in private. However, all attempts to check his story by tracking down the archaeological students have so far been unsuccessful.

On or close to the same date, 'Mac' Brazel, a rancher, made a strange find on his ranch near Corona, New Mexico, about 75 miles (120 kilometres) north-west of Roswell, and 150 miles (240 kilometres) east of the site of Barnett's discovery. Brazel's was a small, rough ranch in isolated country, nearly 30 miles (50 kilometres) from the nearest town. His wife and family normally lived in town so that his children could attend school, but they were with him at the time of these events. Brazel died in 1963; this account is based on an interview with his son Bill.

The previous night there had been a severe thunder storm – a not infrequent occurrence in this region – and Brazel had heard a loud explosion quite distinct from the thunder. Next morning, he rode out to check on his sheep, and found a collection of unidentifiable wreckage strewn over an area of ground some quarter of a mile (400 metres) in length, in a narrow strip running in the direction of Socorro. Having more important concerns, he didn't at the time take much interest in the wreckage; but a day or two later he thought he would go back and take another look.

Right: 'Mac' Brazel, who discovered what was apparently UFO wreckage on his ranch near Corona, New Mexico. Two years later, his son Bill happened to mention in a tavern that he still had some of the wreckage. The very next day, it was confiscated by the military

What he found was fragments of a metallic, foil-like substance, very thin and pliable, but immensely tough – he could neither crease nor permanently bend it. There seemed to be some markings resembling writing, and attached to some of the fragments was a tape-like material which, when held to the light, seemed to have a design on it, vaguely floral in appearance.

The following night he happened to visit Corona, the nearest town, and there he told friends of his find: in return he learned that several people had seen flying saucers lately in the neighbourhood – more than a dozen in all, and not apparently attributable to rocket tests from the nearby White Sands Missile Range. He wondered if his find was in some way connected with these sightings, and next day, while visiting the larger town of Roswell on farming business, he informed the sheriff. The sheriff advised him to go to the military with his story: there was an Army Air Force base just outside Roswell.

### Silenced by the authorities

A reporter from the local radio station heard of Brazel's discovery, and recorded an interview with him before he went to see the military. But when the local radio station started to put the story out, it was immediately silenced by the authorities, who claimed to be speaking in the national interest and threatened the station with removal of its licence. And when Brazel got to the military, he found they were very definitely interested: they held him for questioning while troops descended on his ranch and combed the area to gather every scrap of the strange material. A number of local residents had heard enough about the matter to go out to the Brazel ranch to see for themselves, but they found the road blocked by troops and the area cordoned off. It was several days before the army allowed Brazel to return home; he was discouraged and upset at the way he had been treated – 'Gosh, I just tried to do a good deed and they put me in jail for it.' He said he had been told to keep quiet about his find, and told his children there was no need for them to know more than what they would read in the papers.

But the papers and the radio had conflicting, fragmented accounts to give their publics. Among those who had been alerted by the news to visit the Brazel ranch was reporter Johnny McBoyle, part owner of Radio KSWS of Roswell. On 7 July Radio KOAT in nearby Albuquerque, which possessed more extensive transmission facilities, received a telephone message from McBoyle, for relay: 'A flying saucer has crashed. . . . No, I'm not joking . . . . near Roswell. I've been there

and seen it. It's like a big crumpled dishpan. Some rancher has hauled it under a cattle shelter with his tractor. The army is there and they are going to pick it up. The whole area is now closed off. And get this – they're saying something about little men being on board. . . . Start getting this on the teletype right away while I'm on the phone. . . .'

The operator began to comply, but the teleprinter suddenly stopped transmitting and instead printed an incoming message: 'ATTENTION ALBUQUERQUE: DO NOT TRANSMIT THIS MESSAGE. STOP COMMUNICATION IMMEDIATELY.' The caller was unidentified.

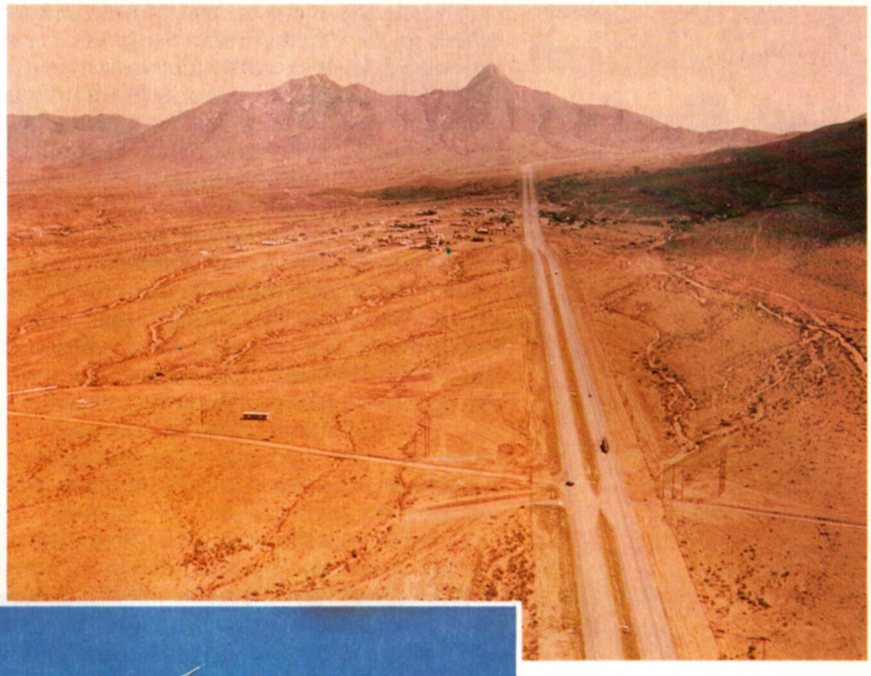
When the operator got in touch with McBoyle again, the reporter said: 'Forget about it. You never heard it. Look, you're not supposed to know.'

Discrepancies between these accounts are at once apparent. McBoyle claimed to have actually seen an object 'like a crumpled dishpan' on a ranch near Roswell, which seems to imply the Brazel ranch: yet Brazel is supposed to have found only fragments, a matter on which his surviving children today are quite clear. Curiously, too, the headlines of the *Roswell Daily Record* for 8 July read 'RAAF captures flying saucer on ranch in Roswell region'.

The story accompanying that headline was in the form of a press statement from the Army Air Force, and was printed as a quotation from the Public Relations Officer at Roswell Army Air Field, First Lieutenant Haut. The press release stated:

> The many rumours regarding the flying disc became a reality yesterday when the intelligence office of the 509th Bomb Group of the Eighth Air Force, Roswell Army Air Field, was fortunate enough to gain possession of a disc through the co-operation of one of the local ranchers and the sheriff's office of Chaves county.
>
> The flying object landed on a ranch near Roswell some time last week. Not having phone facilities, the rancher stored the disc until such time as he was able to contact the sheriff's office, who in turn notified Major Jesse A. Marcel, of the 509th Bomb Group Intelligence Office.
>
> Action was immediately taken and the disc was picked up at the rancher's home. It was inspected at the Roswell Army Air Field and subsequently loaned by Major Marcel to higher headquarters.

Was Lieutenant Haut acting under instructions from his base commander? According to his own recollections, he was: Colonel Blanchard asked him to write and distribute a news release to the effect that the Army Air Force had recovered the remains of a crashed flying saucer. Haut asked if it was possible for him to see the object, but Colonel Blanchard told him this would be impossible. If Haut *was* acting under instructions, his press report takes on the status of an official statement. And if so, it deserves to be taken very seriously, for the army unit that put it out was not a group likely to act irresponsibly. The 509th Bomb Group was something of an élite force, made up of hand-picked personnel, and Colonel Blanchard went on to reach the rank of general. If the



Above: General Ramey (left) with his adjutant, Colonel Dubose. Only a few hours after its release, General Ramey squashed the army announcement that it was examining a 'flying disk'. This picture was intended to substantiate the claim that the alleged UFO was merely a weather balloon; but it was widely alleged that the debris was fake

Left: a view of the New Mexican desert at White Sands Proving Ground, where a V-2 rocket-testing programme was in progress at the time of the Roswell incident

Below left: a guided missile takes off from White Sands in a test undertaken during the 1960s. The path of the alleged Roswell UFO passed very close to White Sands – perhaps a reason for concern on the part of the military

Top: Major Jesse Marcel, who was initially put in charge of the alleged UFO wreckage. The original debris was apparently made up of fragments of a foil-like, metallic substance, pliable but immensely tough: it could be neither creased nor permanently bent. Marcel did not believe that the object was a wrecked weather balloon

statement was official, it is certain that the Army Air Force would not have issued it unless they considered they had good grounds for doing so. However, it all rests on Lieutenant Haut's own recollection of events, so this interpretation must remain provisional.

Whatever the truth is, the report displeased the army at a higher level. Within hours of the press announcement, General Ramey, from Fort Worth in the adjoining state of Texas, went on the radio to tell the public that the entire affair was a case of mistaken identification. As for flying saucers, he declared, 'there is no such gadget known to the Army, at least not at this level.'

The radio disclaimer was followed by a press conference: photographers were allowed to photograph the fragments from a distance. In a second press conference they were allowed to get closer, but it was widely suspected that the material they were shown on the second occasion was not the same as the first, nor was it what had been found on the Brazel ranch. It was extremely fragile and flimsy, as was to be expected if it came from the stray weather balloon that the army claimed it to be. Brazel himself, while keeping quiet as instructed, insisted 'I am sure what I found was not any weather observation balloon.'

Brazel's son Bill collected some of the fragments, and kept them. Two years later, however, he happened to mention them in a tavern in Corona. The very next day he received a visit from the military, who told him it was important for national security and confiscated his collection. That, two years after the event, the army should be so concerned about some stray fragments of a weather balloon is, at the very least, improbable.

We must also note as particularly strange the fact that Brazel was kept in military custody even after the authorities had identified the fragments as being from a harmless balloon. By any standards, if they were telling the truth, they seem to have overreacted to an astonishing degree.

The Roswell incident cannot be dismissed as hysteria. Brazel had not acted hysterically, but calmly, indeed casually, out of a simple patriotic wish to do what was right. He had no political, religious or personal axe to grind, he was seeking neither fame nor fortune. Again, hysteria does not account for the army's press statement: military intelligence officers are not apt to jeopardise their careers, to say nothing of the national interest, by issuing sensational rumours as fact. In this instance it is their later actions, rather than the initial statement, that give the impression of hasty action, intended to defuse the explosive character of the original announcement.

### Fragmentary evidence?

We should not disregard the contradictions and inconsistencies in the knowledge we have of what may have happened at Roswell during those July days; but neither should we exaggerate their significance, as we piece together fragments of largely hearsay testimony gathered many years after the event. We do seem justified in concluding that together they point to some such sequence of events as this: that the Wilmots saw a large, glowing object hurtle through the sky in the direction of Brazel's ranch; that Brazel heard an explosion that night and next morning found debris from some kind of accident; and that, after changing direction in consequence of that accident, the object proceeded in a westwards direction, passing over Socorro to crash finally at San Agustin, where it was seen by Barnett.

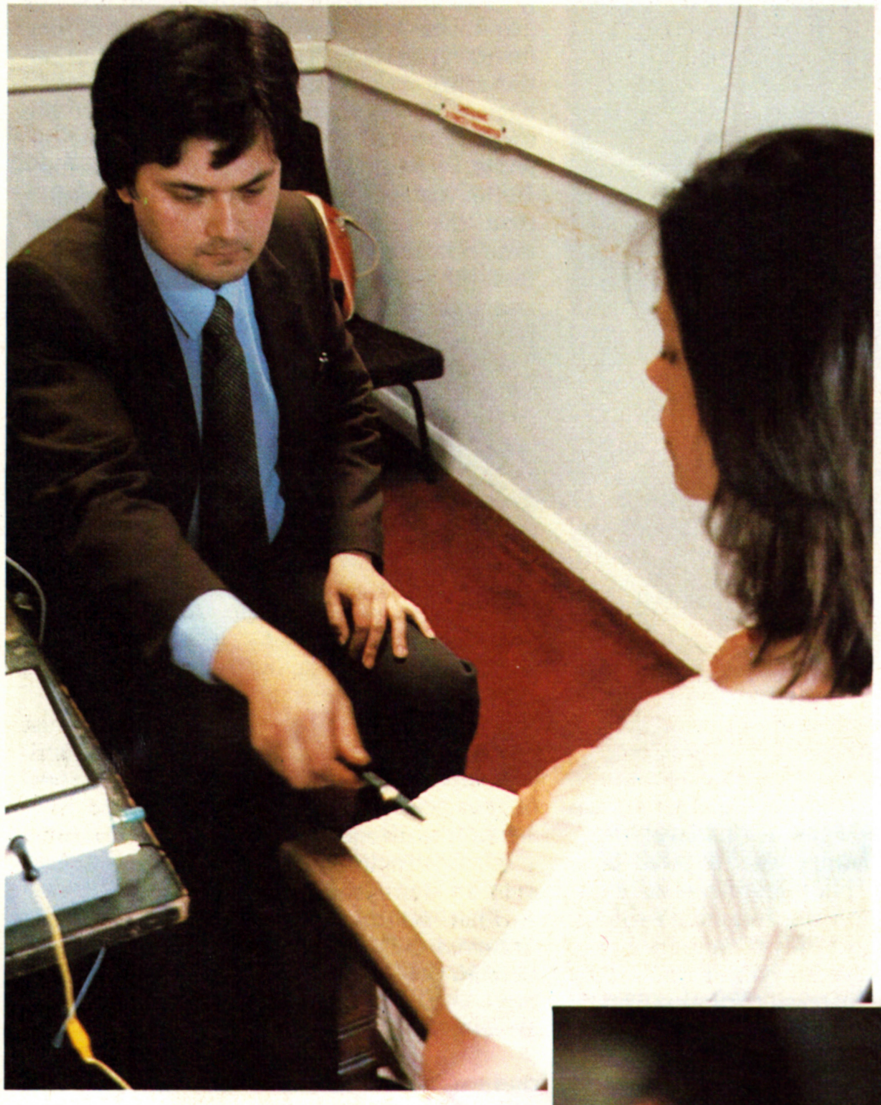
That some chain of events may have occurred is borne out by the reports published in the local papers at the time, and by first- and second-hand testimony obtained directly from many of those who saw and heard things, It seems equally clear that there was a rapid and urgent move by the authorities to clamp down on the release of information: the interrupted broadcast and radio transmission, the intervention by General Ramey from Fort Worth, the two press conferences with their unsatisfactory alternative explanation – all this gives good cause to believe that the army was concerned about something more important than a weather balloon that had lost its way.

And the Roswell story doesn't end there, nor was it the only incident of its kind. What of the object itself, alleged to have been taken away by the army? What about those alien bodies strewn across the desert? What did the military do with the remains?

*Alien corpses examined secretly at army bases: the evidence. See page 2058*

# A shock to science

**A therapist who formerly used Kirlian photography to make his diagnoses now employs an even more radical new method: turning his patients into human 'radio beacons'. GUY LYON PLAYFAIR describes the results**



RECEIVING A MEDICAL EXAMINATION from Harry Oldfield, a young and unconventional English therapist, is very different from one's normal experience of doctors. The consulting room contains none of the familiar trappings of the medical profession: with its rows of electrical appliances, it looks more like an engineering workshop.

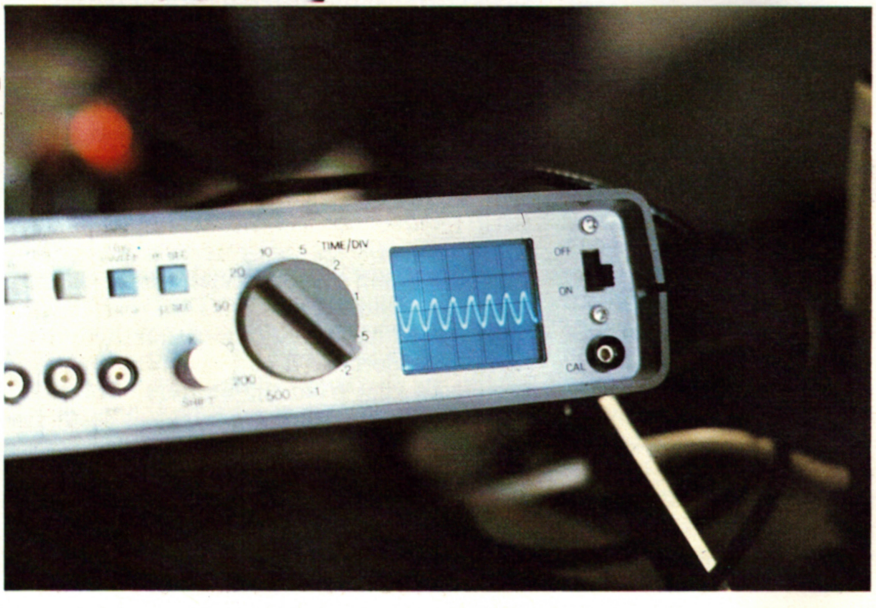
The patient is not asked to undress, breathe deeply or say 'ah'. Oldfield asks no questions at all, in fact. He links his apparatus to the patient's body by an electrical lead. After asking the patient to remove all metal objects from his person, he switches on the machine, picks up a probe that resembles a cigar tube and begins to pass it closely all over the patient's body, holding it a little distance away. At the same time he watches two dancing green lines on an oscilloscope. One of the lines occasionally alters its shape. When it does so, he pauses and makes a note.

After about 10 minutes the examination is over. What exactly, the patient may well wonder, has been happening?

The patient's body has in effect been diagnosing itself. Oldfield has been channelling high-frequency electrical signals into it and the body has absorbed some of their energy. It has re-emitted some of the absorbed energy, which the probe has detected. One of the green lines on the screen shows what goes into the body, the other shows what comes out. Oldfield makes his diagnoses by comparing these, aided by his previous experience and a touch of intuition. He has found that the signal returning from a diseased part of the body tends to differ from that returning from a healthy area. He has learned to associate certain types of signal modification with specific diseases.

Various medical establishments have investigated Oldfield's technique: although in general they prefer not to publicise their interest, some findings have been made known. In October 1981 Oldfield's methods were put to a preliminary and informal test by Dr Andrew Lockie, a general practitioner with keen interest in 'non-invasive' medicine – methods of treatment not involving drugs or surgery. Dr Lockie invited Oldfield to scan 10 of his patients, including several with known past or present cancers. He told Oldfield nothing about them, and Oldfield did not converse with the patients.

Dr Lockie concluded that, of the 10 written diagnoses made by Oldfield, four were 'very good', four were 'good' and two were 'fair'. He noted that the results with the

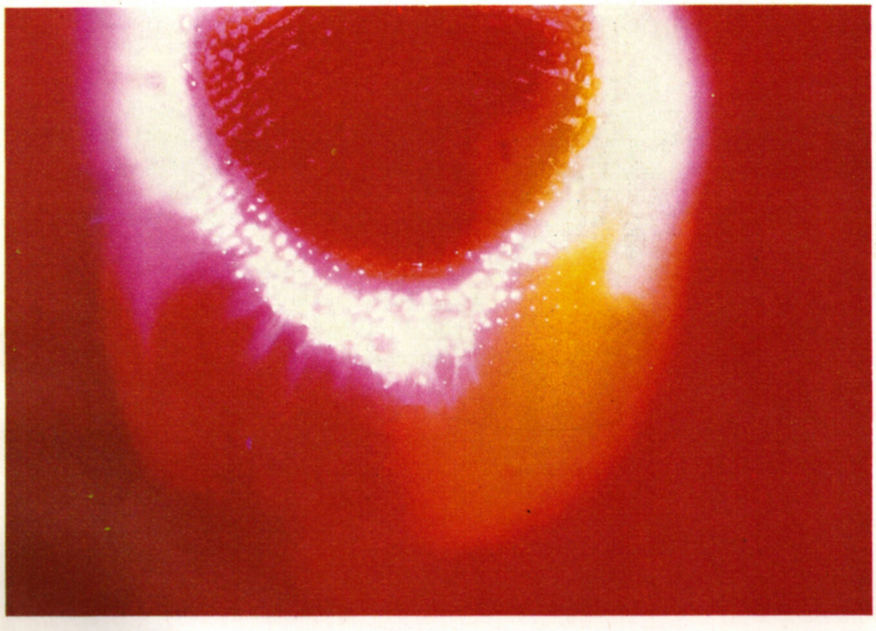


Opposite: at a consultation with Harry Oldfield (above) a patient dons a belt that is connected by an electrical lead to a high-frequency signal generator. Oldfield runs an electrical detector probe over the patient's body. The signal it picks up is displayed on an oscilloscope (below) and Oldfield interprets this signal to arrive at his diagnosis of the patient's condition

cancer patients were 'particularly encouraging'. He added: 'The method does definitely seem to give indication of where malignant change might be occurring.'

Some of the notes made by Oldfield proved to be very accurate. After examining a 50-year-old man he wrote: 'Very large changes and past indication of trauma, post-operative, etc, over the bladder and prostate area.' The man had had a tumour removed from his bladder the previous year. Another patient, a woman of 57, was suffering from cancer of the bile duct, which had spread to the liver. Oldfield's notes on her were: 'Very large disturbance, which went off the scale, on the liver, gall bladder and duct.'

Some of his diagnoses are apparently incorrect. Yet there is an intriguing complication here: the uncertainty inherent in conventional medical diagnoses. On more than one occasion Oldfield has diagnosed a complaint of which neither patient nor doctor was aware. Once, the patient was himself a doctor. Oldfield told him to have a look at four specific parts of the body. The doctor found something wrong in each of them.



Above: a Kirlian picture of the fingertip of a cancer sufferer, made by Harry Oldfield. The extensive, irregular coronal discharge around the image of the finger could, when carefully interpreted by a skilled physician, give valuable clues to the patient's condition, according to the advocates of the technique

Right: a picture of the same patient's fingertip after treatment by a healer (not Harry Oldfield), showing the small, regular 'aura' allegedly typical of the healthy

In another case Oldfield identified 'irregularities' in the breast area of one of his patients. Dr Lockie then examined her and found chronic mastitis (inflammation) in both breasts. 'I feel the results are most encouraging, given the relatively embryonic stage of the apparatus and the art so far,' he concluded. He was sufficiently impressed by Oldfield's demonstration to acquire similar equipment and to set about gaining experience with it.

Harry Oldfield first became interested in the electromagnetic properties of the human body in the late 1970s, while he was carrying out spare-time research in his home with Kirlian apparatus. He was well aware of the many problems associated with this intriguing but controversial technique, but as a biologist he was interested in all the manifestations of living matter.

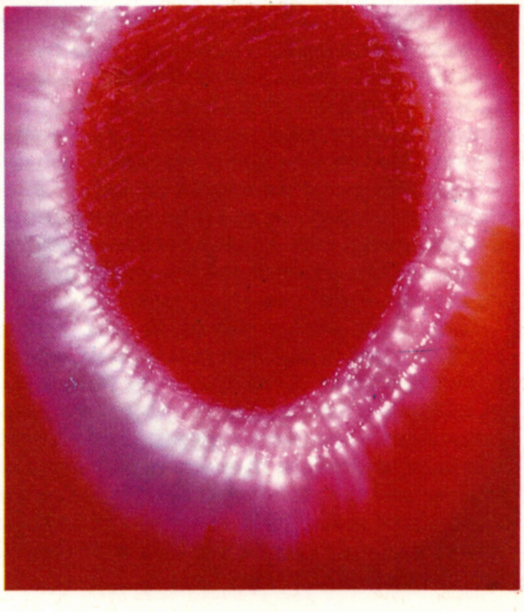
Kirlian pictures can show animal or plant tissues or inanimate objects. The object being photographed may be placed between two electrodes to which a high-frequency alternating voltage is applied; or it may be earthed and serve as one of the electrodes. The film is laid on a layer of insulating material covering the non-earthed electrode. The film is not exposed to light, nor is a lens used. Electrical discharges around the object directly cause patterns that are seen in the developed film. (See page 632.)

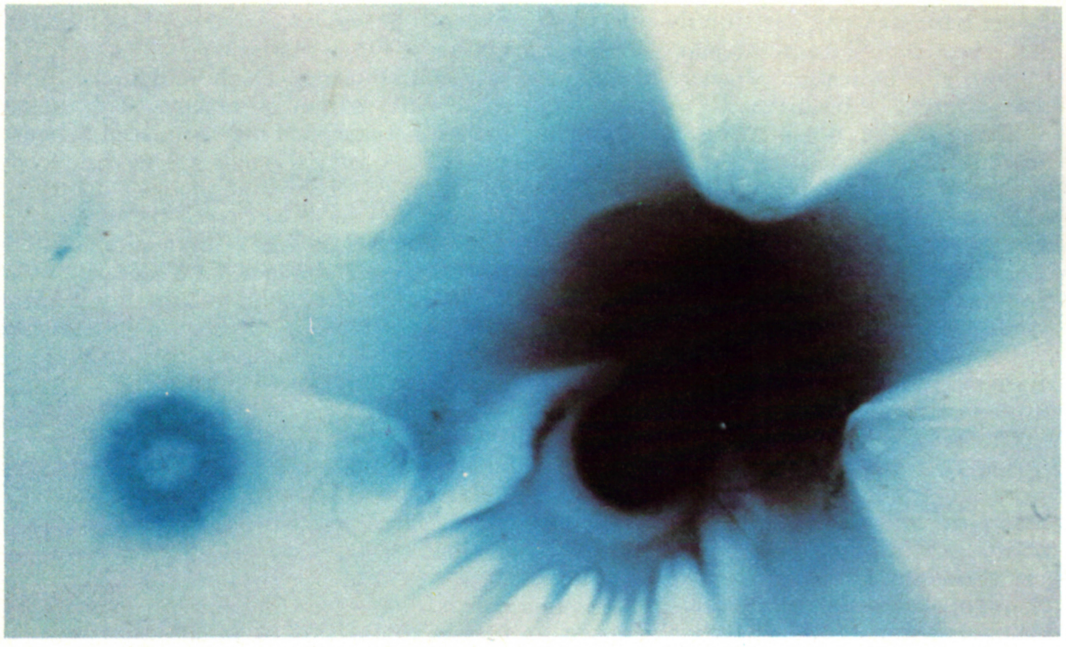
### Phantom photography

Some of the most striking pictures that Oldfield obtained were of 'phantom' leaves. The Soviet scientist Viktor Inyushin had claimed that if, after a Kirlian picture of a freshly cut leaf had been taken, a small part of the leaf was cut away, a second Kirlian picture would show an image – a 'phantom' – of the missing area.

Oldfield attempted to make such pictures. He took precautions against a common criticism: that they result when experimenters fail to clean the electrodes thoroughly. If traces remain on the electrode when part of the leaf has been cut away, they could give rise to the 'phantom' image. Oldfield went further than merely cleaning the electrodes: he used a fresh electrode. And on several occasions he did indeed succeed in obtaining a picture of the whole leaf, including the missing area.

Oldfield does not follow others into the wilder realms of speculation about the significance of pictures of this kind. Some enthusiasts claim that Kirlian photography reveals the 'etheric body', a psychic counterpart to the material body. The etheric body is said to be normally coextensive with the ordinary body, but separates from it at death. Its condition reflects the state of health or sickness of the organism. But Oldfield is not





Left: another comparison, by Kirlian photography, of healthy and cancerous tissue – this time taken from the same patient at the same time. The healthy sample (left) has a small 'aura'; the cancerous tissue, by contrast, has a far bigger and wildly irregular one (right)

dogmatic on the topic, and he emphasises that one-off Kirlian pictures that cannot be replicated at will have no scientific value.

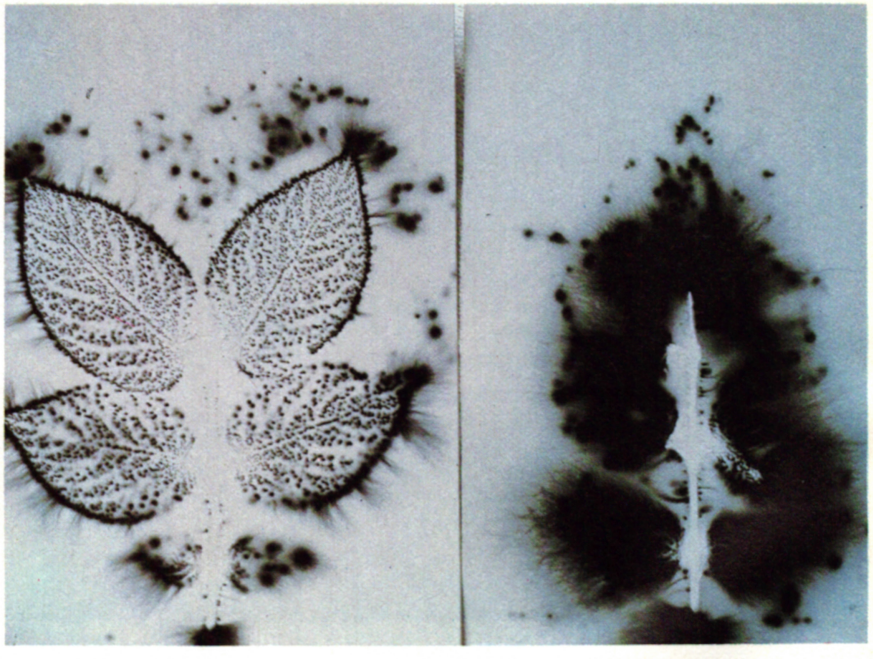
He was anxious, however, to follow up the claims of researchers such as Inyushin and another Soviet scientist, Dr I. Florin Dumitrescu, that the Kirlian method could be of value as a diagnostic tool.

Oldfield collaborated with Glen Rein, a University of London biochemist interested in the effects of electromagnetic fields on chemical processes in living things, in a test of Kirlian diagnosis. They reported a difference in the Kirlian pictures they obtained of the hands of healthy women and of women suffering from breast tumours. The bright haloes appearing in the pictures, surrounding the hands, were broader in the cases of the women suffering from cancer.

### Haloes and health

This supported the discovery reported by Dr Fritz A. Popp of the University of Marburg in West Germany that the visible electrical discharge from cancerous tissue was different from that of healthy tissue. Later Oldfield was able to verify the claim of the American researcher Dr L. W. Konikiewicz that washing and drying the hand of a healthy person immediately before Kirlian photography caused a temporary diminution in the visible halo appearing in the picture, while seeming to have no effect at all on the hand of a cancer patient.

With the co-operation of a surgeon, Oldfield and Rein next made a series of Kirlian pictures of many dozens of samples of cancerous tissue and healthy tissue, extracted from the same living patient. There was a considerable difference between the healthy and the infected samples: the former were surrounded by a narrow and regular outline, whereas the latter were surrounded by a large and irregular halo.



Above: a phantom plant image appears and vanishes, in a sequence of photographic negatives made by Harry Oldfield using the Kirlian technique. Having taken a picture of the whole plant (left), he stripped off its leaves. Then he saw images of the leaves reappear. During the 10 to 15 seconds that they were visible he was able to take a picture (right), using a clean electrode and a clean glass plate

By this time Oldfield had already developed his first radio-frequency scanning method. Pointing his detector probe at the two tissue samples, he found clear differences between the signals coming from the healthy tissues and those coming from the cancerous ones.

He gradually abandoned the use of the Kirlian device for diagnostic work, though he continued informal experiments with it. His radio probing technique, which he eventually called the electronographic scanning method (ESM), promised to be more accurate, as well as faster and cheaper. With it he could reach a diagnosis in a few minutes, if necessary, without the delay involved in developing a Kirlian picture.

*On page 2078: can sickness be healed by high-frequency electric fields?*

# Post script

**Your letters to THE UNEXPLAINED**

Dear Sir,

Apart from myself there is only one man in the whole world who can vouch for the accuracy of this story. I hope he reads it – not for my sake particularly, but for the benefit of those who seek answers to illogical events and weird experiences.

It occurred in Naples, Italy, one afternoon in the summer of 1946. I had just finished tea in the [Allied] Officers' Club situated above the famous San Carlo Theatre at the lower end of the Via Roma. I was about to descend its ornate spiral staircase when I received the biggest shock in my life – climbing up the stairs towards me was a 'dead' man. . . . The effect of seeing him was devastating; I turned into a solid block of ice.

The 'dead' man – in his early 30s and dressed in the uniform of a British army major – continued to walk up towards me. At last our eyes met.

He reeled back as if he had suddenly walked into a brick wall. Horror and astonishment moulded his face into a grotesque mask of disbelief. For an eternity we stood with mouths agape, then with cries of anguish we fell into each other's arms, sobbing uncontrollably.

'Dick! I thought you were dead!' cried the man. I replied that I had thought the same about him. He said he had been in North Africa and I told him I had been stationed in Naples for the past 18 months. We then went and had tea together. We discussed the war, conditions back home, where we had been and what we had been doing. The conversation flowed easily and spontaneously, but gradually I became aware of an uneasiness that I couldn't explain.

'Do you know something?' I asked at length. 'Here we are, two old pals – yet for the life of me I can't remember your name.'

'That's odd,' rejoined the Major with a laugh, 'because I can't remember yours either.'

'Dick Francis,' I prompted.

'Doesn't mean a damned thing,' said the Major in a puzzled tone. I pointed out that he had called me 'Dick' when we met on the staircase. I repeated his exact words.

'I said that?' he queried incredulously. I repeated – firmly – that he had. The Major looked at me disbelievingly and my uneasiness increased.

'You haven't told me *your* name yet,' I prompted.

He looked at me steadily and then, almost unwillingly, blurted out a name. I had never heard it before in my life – and I did not hesitate to tell him so. Now it was the Major's turn to look uneasy and he lapsed into a long silence, which he broke suddenly by banging his fist down on the table.

'Stop bloody joking,' he barked. 'Who the hell are you?' Just as angrily I retorted with exactly the same question. We glared at each other in open defiance – and then burst out laughing. After all, the situation was clearly absurd.

'Look, Major,' I said softly, 'when we met on the stairs just now it was a case of instantaneous and mutual recognition.' He nodded. I added: 'And we wept real tears.' Again, he nodded. I had to ask – 'So who did you think I was?'

'I don't know, I just don't know,' he replied.

'But you knew me?'

'Yes – or I thought I did.'

A long pause followed, and somehow the room temperature seemed to drop dramatically. I saw the Major shiver. It was my turn to be interrogated; but no, I didn't know who he was and yes, I had indeed 'recognised' him on the stairs.

'We must have met somewhere,' the Major said with conviction. 'Let's start at the beginning.'

Step by step we compared notes, starting from our respective birthplaces, our schools, where we had worked, army careers and holidays. But after a full 15 minutes we still sat and looked at each other blankly – for it was obvious we had never met until that day!

We agreed that it was 'bloody queer' that we should both have experienced the immediate recognition and emotional relief of seeing each other alive, like two brothers, or even father and son.

We sat there, arms folded, staring at the red and white tablecloth silently. I began to feel uneasy again and icy fingers were dancing up and down my spine. I looked up suddenly. The Major was staring at me with an unconcealed look of hatred and disgust.

I remember shivering involuntarily and dropped my gaze to the tablecloth once more. I felt afraid – more afraid than at any other time in my life. A wave of intense hostility swept over me.

I jumped up, ready for a fight – strange as it seems, ready to kill if necessary – but instead I merely extended my hand. 'I'll be getting along,' I muttered, 'It's getting late.'

The Major looked dazed and uncomprehending, but dragged himself to his feet. He looked at my outstretched hand, but made no attempt to take it. Slowly his hand moved towards mine and our eyes met. For a moment it seemed as if neither of us could move a muscle, and then, with what seemed a superhuman effort he gripped my hand. The horror of that moment will live with me forever – the hand I had just taken was damp, cold and lifeless!

I sprang back – I recall I moaned with terror – and ran from the room. I looked round just long enough to see that the Major was feverishly mopping his hand on his uniform. Then he looked up and our eyes met for the last time. We both shuddered violently, for at that precise moment we had both realised that we had shaken hands *with dead men*. . . .

I fled down that spiral staircase and out into the hot Neapolitan sunshine, but it was a very long time before I felt the benefit of its warmth.

But what of the Major? I often wonder where he is now – if, indeed, he was ever 'alive' when I met him.

And if, even if he is a very old man, by some quirk of fate he reads this, will he have the guts to come forward and contact me through *The Unexplained*? I hope so, for several reasons. I hope he does so if only to substantiate this strange story; secondly, to give him a chance to tell his own version of the story, and thirdly to give those who delve into the unknown the opportunity to air their own theories.

So what about it, Major? Who are you and what was this bond that once seemed – fleetingly – to exist between us, that we recognised on that spiral staircase in Naples so long ago?

Yours faithfully,

*H.R. (Dick) Francis* Greater Manchester

Send *your* letters to THE UNEXPLAINED, Orbis House, 20–22 Bedfordbury, London WC2N 4BT

# Just William

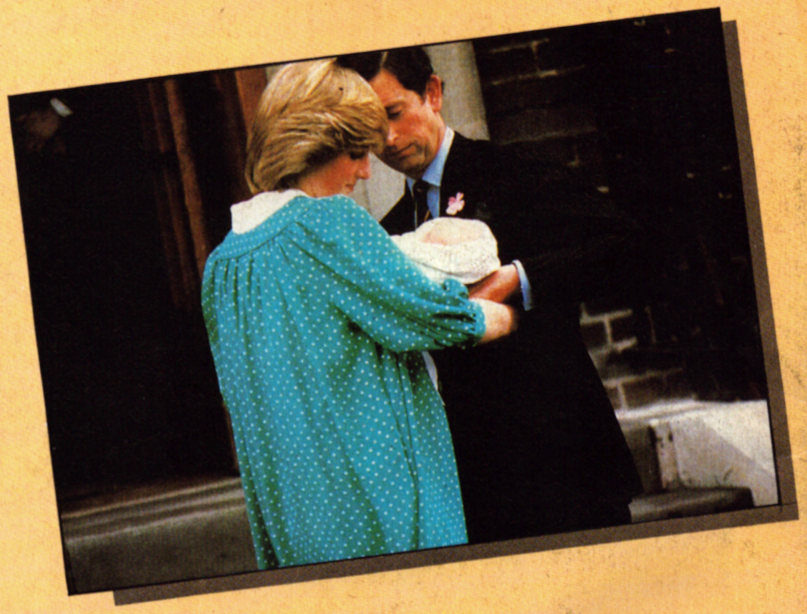
The birth of a son to the Prince and Princess of Wales at 9.03 p.m. on Monday, 21 June 1982 was greeted with great rejoicing – but also with a flurry of 'instant' horoscopes for the royal baby in newspapers and magazines. And at one festival for psychics an interviewer elicited some very mixed predictions from the participants, including prophecies of alcoholism and his adolescent involvement with revolutionaries. *The Unexplained*, however, took a little more time over its horoscope for Prince William. These are our results:

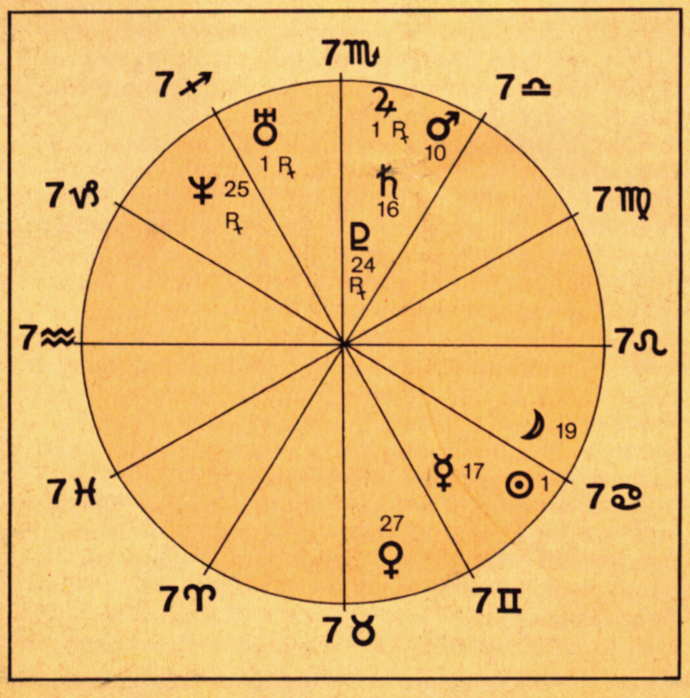
The most immediately striking point about this horoscope is the near-conjunction of four planets in the ninth house. Three of them, Mars, Saturn and Pluto, are in Libra, the sign of justice and fair rule; the fourth is Jupiter, the planet that represents kingship, and its presence in Scorpio signifies a great involvement with legal and financial matters.

The Sun is on the cusp between Gemini and Cancer. This would lead one to expect a personality full of charm, with a love of spectacle and ritual; versatile and capable, but not outstandingly academic. The ascendant sign is Aquarius, suggesting a person slightly below average height, rather thickset, with an inherent weakness in legs and ankles. He will have a good complexion, a longish face, and light hair darkening later in life. Blue eyes may change later to hazel.

The Moon in Cancer, where she rules, indicates a love of home life. There is also a suggestion of a particularly strong affection for his mother, which is enhanced by the position of Venus in the fourth house, in Taurus where she rules; the opposition to Uranus in the tenth house indicates a tug of emotion, the father drawing the child in one direction, the mother in the other. Venus in Taurus also denotes a delight in fine clothes and pleasure in a luxuriously furnished home. Mercury rules in Gemini, strengthening the love of home and family.

Most of the planetary aspects are good. Mars in Libra is conjunct to Saturn and trine to Mercury, indicating an active and prominent social life; Saturn in Libra is the sign of discipline and responsibility, wealth and high standing. Jupiter trine to the Sun is an excellent indication for a future king. The only discordant aspect is Moon square to Saturn; the Moon is in the sixth house, and in Cancer, suggesting a serious internal illness, and Saturn is in the ninth, indicating that this illness may occur while the subject is travelling abroad, but the prognostications for full recovery are excellent.



Marriage is represented by the seventh house: the opposition of Venus and Uranus, square to this house, could indicate considerable disagreement between mother and father over the subject's choice of bride. However, Sun and Mercury together in the fifth house indicate a happy life and a successful marriage. The eighth house is for death and inheritance: here it seems clear that Prince William will come to the throne by the natural course of events, and not by any sudden accident.

There is one last point of interest. The presence of both Uranus and Neptune in Sagittarius, and in the tenth and eleventh houses respectively, suggests the possibility that Prince William could become the leader of a religious or philosophic cult.